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THE
SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS
OF THE KIPSIGIS



KITISIGIS WARRIORS

THE SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE KIPSIGIS

BY

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Illustrated

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To
MY DEVOTED FATHER

whose one object in life has been the promotion
of my knowledge,

To
MY LOVING MOTHER

and to
MY WIFE

without whose help this work would have
never been written

This Book is Dedicated

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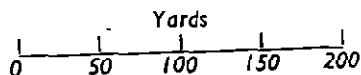
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ERRATUM

On Map page 132 the scale should read—



and not as printed.

FOREWORD

This essay is the outcome of nine months' field-work among the Kipsigis tribe of Kenya. It is a descriptive account of the customs and social institutions I have personally witnessed, and I have tried to use as little as possible the information of my Kipsigis friends which I was not able to check *de visu*. As this is primarily a monograph on the Kipsigis, I thought it was best not to use for critical purposes the data collected by previous ethnographers among kindred tribes in Kenya, as I was not able to use their works in the field.¹

The main difficulty I had to contend with was my linguistic unpreparedness. When I arrived in Peelkut I did not know a single word of Kipsigis, and it is mainly through the goodwill of my interpreter and friend, Arap Chuma, that I have made some small progress in that most difficult language.

The Kipsigis are a reticent tribe, naturally distrustful of all strangers. During the first fortnight they steadfastly refused to put my tent up, and I constantly received ultimatums from delegations of warriors, who accused me of being a spy sent by the Government to confiscate their land and their cattle. It is mainly through the kindness of Dr. Wilkinson, the District Medical Officer, who supplied me with quinine, which I distributed among them during the malaria epidemic, that I succeeded in making my first reliable friends.

Another difficulty I had to contend with was the high rainfall (91 inches), making travelling and communications extremely difficult.

On the brighter side of the picture it should be said that the Kipsigis, who can be dangerous enemies, are also the best and most loyal of friends, and I wish to record here my thanks to the Great Kiruogindet, Arap Terer, and to Arap Seuer for their unfailing courtesy and hospitality.

¹ Expressions like "compensation for murder" are only used in the text as convenient mediums of expression.

FOREWORD

Professor Malinowski, whose pupil I have been for nearly two years, has been for me a constant source of inspiration. His passionate devotion to Anthropology and the interest he takes in his pupils bring back to mind the medieval traditions of the Magister. My debt to him is greater than I could say.

I am very grateful to Dr. Evans-Pritchard for reading my MS. and giving me very sound advice and helping me with his vast knowledge of kindred tribes. My debt to him for his contribution of a valuable Introduction is very great indeed.

I want to express my thanks to my supervisor, Dr. R. R. Marett, to Professor René Maunier, and to Professor Radcliffe-Brown for the many useful suggestions they made.

I wish also to record my gratitude to Mr. T. K. Penniman, Secretary to the Oxford Committee for Anthropology, for his unfailing courtesy and helpfulness.

Miss Margaret Mare was kind enough to read the manuscript and to correct some of the many lapses a foreigner commits when writing English.

Mr. Ian Orchardson was good enough to let me read his paper on the Kipsigis and to let me use his dictionary, both of which were very helpful to me.

If it were possible to thank one's father I would say that without his understanding and the generosity with which he undertook to bear the entire financial burden of this enterprise, I would never have been able to attempt this work.

It is in Kericho that we learned the real sense of hospitality. The settlers and the officials were so good to us, and made us so welcome in their homes that my wife and myself spent there some of the happiest days of our life.

Thanks and farewell to you also my Kipsigis. You have shown yourselves to be good and loyal friends, men in the true sense of the word.

TRANSLITERATION

My aim has been to simplify as much as possible the spelling of Kipsigis words, and for this reason no definite system has been adopted ; but it must be understood that the result is only what I think is the best approximation to the Kipsigis sound.

a as in father
e as in fence
i as in in
o as in force
u as in moon
y as in yeast

ai as in dry
ei as in say
oi as in boy

c as in car
d as in dead
f as in fat
g as in glare

j as in French Jean

k as in king

l as in lace

m as in magic

n as in not

r as in race

s as in sage

t as in toy

v as in van

w as in war

z as in zeal

jn as in French reine

gn as in French montagne

ph as in Greek $\Phi\omega\varsigma$

I have never been quite able to distinguish the p from the b and the k from the g when these letters are placed at the beginning or the end of a word.

INTRODUCTION

By E. E. EVANS-PRITCHARD

Dr. Peristiany has honoured me by asking me to write this introduction. He is the first of his countrymen to study a primitive people and he is to be congratulated on his enterprise in conducting research entirely on his own responsibility and on the admirable account of the Kipsigis he has given us.

Anthropology in Kenya has been left to the initiative of individuals. Our knowledge of the peoples is not a good advertisement for scientific *laissez-faire*. Although Europeans have been settled in Kenya for about half a century we know very little about the social structure of its peoples. Most records were made when social anthropology was very immature, both in methodology and in field technique, and the information was, with the exception of Dr. Gerhard Lindblom's admirable monograph on the Akamba (1920), collected by laymen. One of the groups about which we know very little is the Nilo-Hamitic group, in spite of the pioneer work of Mr. (now Sir Claud) Hollis, whose volumes on the Masai (1905) and the Nandi (1909) are still our main authorities for these two peoples. Dr. Peristiany's book is, therefore, especially valuable in that it gives us a more comprehensive account of the structure of a tribe of this group than any we have hitherto possessed, so that, whilst it would be hazardous to state that its other members have a like structure, his description will serve as a type by comparison with which they can be classified, and as a point of departure for new research into them.

Though papers have been written about the Kipsigis by other hands,¹ Dr. Peristiany's account is easily the most

¹ Juxon Barton, "Notes on the Kipsigis or Lumbwa tribe of Kenya Colony," *J.R.A.I.*, 1923; C. M. Dobbs, "Diseases of Stock in Lumbwa District," *J.E.A.U.N.H.S.*, 1919; and "Lumbwa Circumcision Ages," *idem*, 1921; I. Q. Orchardson, "Supernatural beliefs of the Lumbwa,"

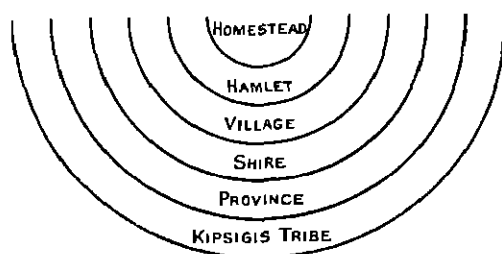
exhaustive and scientific, and it is all the better for being written in a simple and modest style. He has made many important observations, about which much could be said, in several departments of culture, law, kinship, marriage, economics, myth, and so forth, but I think that I can best serve him and the reader by presenting, by brief analysis of his work, the formal political structure of the Kipsigis, since this subject has been most obscure in earlier writings on the Nilo-Hamitic peoples of Kenya and since it is here that Dr. Peristiany has made the most important advance on previous studies.

The Kipsigis are numerically the strongest branch of the Nandi-speaking peoples, their tribal population in 1937 being estimated at about 80,000, with a density of between eighty and a hundred to the square mile. Their homesteads are spread all over the country several hundred yards from one another. A few adjacent homesteads form a *temel*, which we may call a hamlet. Several such *temenik*, hamlets, compose a *kokwet*, which Mr. Peristiany calls a village, though there are no concentrations of homesteads such as this word usually denotes, and a village may straggle for a couple of miles or more. Anything from fifteen to sixty huts are found in a village and no unoccupied stretch of country separates one village from another and gives them spatial distinction. But, though only a tree, or stream, or field, marks the boundaries between villages, the membership of each is well known to everyone. Three or more *kokwotinwek*, villages, are grouped together as a territorial unit, stretching from four to ten miles, for which the Kipsigis have no specific term and which we may call a shire. Mr. Peristiany refers to it as the "group". The shires are grouped into *emotinwek*, provinces, of which there are four: Peelkut, Waldai, Puret, and Sot. The population of these four provinces together form the Kipsigis tribe.

The Kipsigis are Nandi-speaking and have maintained peaceful relations with their neighbours, the Nandi, the

idem, 1919; "Some traits of the Kipsigi in their relation to their contacts with Europeans," *Africa*, 1931; "Notes on the marriage customs of the Kipsigis," *J.E.A.U.N.H.S.*, 1930-1; "Religious beliefs and practices of the Kipsigis," *idem*, 1932-3; "Future development of the Kipsigis with special reference to land tenure," *idem*, 1935; C. E. Ward, "Sun-worship amongst the Kipsigis or Lumbwa," *idem*, 1926.

Keyu, the Tugen, and the Suk, regarding them as their brothers. Indeed, these peoples may be considered a loose federation of tribes, for, although there is no common government, they speak related dialects, intermarry, and recognize mutual obligations to pay compensation for homicide. No war can take place between peoples who recognize their obligations in this respect. The traditional enemies of the Kipsigis are the Masai to the south and the Kisii and Luo to the west, but they respect the Masai and Luo, because they observe the custom of *saiset*, the granting of life to an enemy who throws a handful of grass at his opponent in request for mercy, and especially with the Masai who also respect the Kipsigis shrine.



Dr. Peristiany's account of the tribal structure shows that in each hamlet there is an elder versed in law and that minor disputes between its members can be settled by his arbitration. If he cannot settle them, or if the dispute is between members of different hamlets, they come before the *poynet ab kokwet*, the headman of the village, to whom the elders of hamlets act as advisers. Mr. Peristiany describes the *kokwet* as "the basic unit of administration". In each there is a headman, the *poynet ab kokwet*, who is not elected but was the assistant of the last leader, who has died or retired. He would not have been appointed assistant had he not had the favour of the community. He tries small cases, with the assistance of the elders, acting as mediator rather than judge, between members of his village. He has no other functions than those of a *kiruogindet*, judge.

The village is also an economic unit and Dr. Peristiany

writes of it that "of all those groups regulating social behaviour the most important now is the *kokwet*, the territorial unit which co-operates in the work of the fields and gives assistance in case of distress". When a man wishes to sow, weed, and harvest his eleusine crop he makes beer and any member of the village who drinks of it must send his wife to assist in the labour on the appointed day. Such a system clearly requires some direction and in every village there is a *kiptayat ab kokwet*, economic leader of the village. He has no other functions. A man's village also assists him in building and supplies him with grain if his harvest has failed, and with food and seed if he is a newly-married man who has come to settle there from another village. Dr. Peristiany stresses the bonds of common residence and points out that neighbours assist one another far more than kinsmen who live at a distance.

The village is thus a political and economic unit. It is also a defensive military unit. The warriors of the village are under a *kiptayat ab murenék*, a war leader, and their duties are to protect the village against attack and to drive its cattle to the grazing grounds and salt-licks. Some ceremonies, for example ritual to rid the country of epidemics, are performed separately for each village community. One of Dr. Peristiany's main contributions has been to show the social importance of the village in Kipsigis life, for till now the smaller and basic territorial units among the Nandi-speaking peoples have not been clearly distinguished, probably because they are not spatially very distinct.

In its juridical and military functions village organization forms part of a wider system of the shire. If a case is not settled by the village authority, or if there is a case between men of different villages, and in all cases of divorce, homicide, and witchcraft, decisions are given by the *kiruogindet neo*, the great judge of the shire. He is assisted by a council of elders. The elders, who are deputies of the various villages of the shire, have chief voice in this council though any adult male can attend it. The judge is not elected but was the assistant of the last judge and would not have been appointed by him without popular acquiescence. He is only the mouthpiece of his council; he can give no order without the consent of his council, and it is the general

opinion of the council, rather than he, which makes judicial decisions.

The shire also has its war leader, the *kiptayat neo nebo murenek*, who is responsible to the judge of the shire. The village war leaders are under his orders and he controls the defensive organization of the shire. These shire war leaders used to be elected at the handing-over ceremony of the age-sets, by a council under the presidency of the judge of the shire and the village headmen.

In each shire there is a ceremonial leader, *pooyot ap tumda*, who transmits his knowledge to his eldest son who may, however, act in a ritual capacity in a different shire from that in which his father operated. The ceremonial leader is independent of the judge and his functions are of a purely ritual character. He officiates at marriage, initiation, the harvest festival, and at other ceremonies, and performs ritual for cleansing persons who have had incestuous relations, and so forth. His particular role in all ceremonies is the offering of prayers to God and he may be regarded as the priest of the shire. He has an assistant whom he trains to succeed him in the shire.

The shire is thus a juridical, military, and ritual unit, but not an economic unit. There are also inter-shire wrestling matches. The shire is part of a wider political group, the *emet*, or province, and questions, such as peace and war, which concern more than one shire are settled by the council of the whole province at which each shire is represented by its judge and his assistant. If there is a case between persons belonging to different shires it is heard under the joint presidency of both judges and their assistants. The province is the largest organized juridical unit of Kipsigisland. It is also the largest military unit, for each province goes to war by itself. Its defensive arrangements have been indicated. Its offensive organization is sketched later. It is also the largest ceremonial unit. Each province holds its handing-over ceremonies and its harvest ceremonies separately.

Mr. Peristiany has thus been able to show that the Kipsigis have a political system based on territorial distribution, with the *kokwet* as its basic unit. He has isolated the significant local groups and demonstrated the part played by each in the juridical, military, ceremonial, and economic

life of the people. Before relating this territorial system to other social systems of the Kipsigis we may emphasize some important features of their political life which emerge from Dr. Peristiany's description of it up to this point.

A Kipsigis is a member of his province not only in virtue of his residence in a village of it but also through the wide range of direct contacts he has with members of its divisions. Thus, as we have seen, the province acts as a unit in certain ceremonies and in warfare, and its segments have corporate ceremonial and juridical interrelations. Moreover, a man with several wives distributes them, each with part of his herd, in homesteads separated as widely as twenty to thirty miles and, thus, not only in different villages, but even in different shires. He visits each of these homesteads in turn. Also when a man has acquired a considerable herd he fears lest a raid or an epidemic cause their total loss and to guard against this he distributes about half of his cattle among friends living as far apart as possible from one another. He still owns the cattle but as long as his friends are alive he cannot take them or their calves back. This custom, known as *kimanagan*, has great social importance for it means that innumerable links are formed between members of the same province, which, together with those created by the regimental, age-set, and clan systems, make a network of social ties within the political structure.

As among the other Nilo-Hamitic peoples, justice is decentralized and its administration democratic. At every point Dr. Peristiany makes it clear that sovereignty lies with the people, that there is popular participation in justice, and that the people are the real authors of it. Though the judges actually speak the decisions they are only reached by general agreement and the sanctions are primarily those of public opinion. The same is true of military leadership. Dr. Peristiany's description of the functions of a Kipsigis judge accords well enough with the views of other authorities.¹

It may, I think, be safely assumed that his precise and formal presentation of the hierarchy of judicial authorities is the Kipsigis picture of what procedure ought to be, rather

¹ Barton, *op. cit.*, p. 49; Orchardson, *Africa*, 1931, p. 469.

than what it usually was. No doubt there was a tendency for cases to be settled in accordance with the structural relationships of the persons concerned in territorial organization, but actual behaviour was probably often in conflict with it before European administration. Formal consistency soon appears in judicial procedure under European control. As Dr. Peristiany points out, almost all cases were civil in the old days, for even when the community punished a man it was always at the instigation of some person whom he had offended. Socially approved violence, self-help backed by public opinion, rather than constraint by established authority, seems to have been the real sanction of rights and the courts appear to have done little more than provide means by which parties anxious to settle a dispute without resort to force could employ arbitration, ensure the stamp of public opinion on the settlement, and, by the terminating act of public sacrifice, prevent a reopening of the affair.

We are told that a husband could obtain no other redress for adultery with his wife than by fighting the adulterer, and that if he killed him he would have to pay full compensation. We are also told that if a man refused to sleep with his wife her brother was deputed to fight him. Indeed, there are many indications that self-help was not only the underlying sanction of all rights but also that it was frequently resorted to. Even in homicide cases the action of the judges went no farther than giving publicity to handing over of the blood-wealth and trying to persuade the parties to end the feud. Nevertheless, public opinion might be expressed actively and collectively by the imposition on an habitual wrongdoer of the collective curse of the village, or by public outlawry of him by his kin which deprived him of their protection and enabled those whom he had offended to put him to death without fear of retaliation. Cattle thieves and witches are said to have been put to death at the orders of the judge of the shire. From the evidence presented and by comparison with other East African peoples we may conclude that except in rare cases of habitual wrongdoing, or of offences considered dangerous to the community as a whole, the threat of force by the kin of an injured man and the desire of the neighbourhood that

justice be done were the main sanctions in the settlement of disputes, and that the courts were the means by which general agreement on the matter could be obtained rather than a tribunal to enforce law and order.

Dr. Peristiany says little of the *laibon*, prophets, who are, in origin, exiled Masai. As the Government had expelled them before his visit to Kipsigisland, he was unable to make observations on their behaviour. Though they seem to have been greatly feared their functions were ritual rather than political, their chief role having been to foretell the fortune of raids, in return for which services they received part of the spoil. They took the part in Kipsigis society once occupied by Kipsigis prophets called *orgoik*.

Dr. Peristiany's elucidation of the territorial system of the Kipsigis can only be fully appreciated by those who have tried to understand the Nandi system by attempting to reconcile the statements of various authorities. They are so much in conflict and so obscure that it is impossible at present to compare the two systems. It is to be hoped that the Nandi territorial organization may be inquired into further in the light of Dr. Peristiany's analysis.

Influenced by the territorial system but structurally independent of it are other important political institutions. One of these is the regimental organization of provinces for offensive warfare and for ceremonial. Every male Kipsigis is born into a regiment (*puriet*). There are four such regiments (*puriosiek*), Kipkayge, Ngetunyo, Kasanet, and Kebeni, and the first two and the last two unite in raids. Dr. Peristiany is of the opinion that these regiments were at one time territorial groups, as they appear to be among the Nandi. Women have no regiments. Normally a man is born into the regiment of his father but not all members of the same clan belong to the same regiment for, in special circumstances, a man may designate his sons, before birth, to a regiment other than his own. As the Nandi have corresponding regiments a man who moves from Nandiland into Kipsigisland, or vice versa, can at once fit into its regimental system.

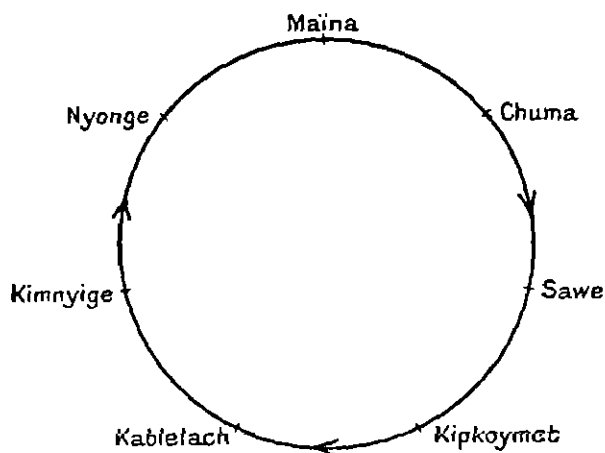
Up to the time when the Kipkoymet were in the warrior grade each pair of regiments within a province went on raids independently of the other and when, in exceptional cases,

they united they did not act under common leadership. This lack of co-ordination lead to a severe defeat by the Kisii after which the four divisions were represented in every raid and each of the four companies (*kwanaiik*) of the army was composed of men recruited in equal numbers from each division, being selected and distributed in the companies by the retired leaders of the province assisted by the village war leaders. At the head of each company was a company leader under the command of the leader of the regiments. These leaders were chosen by the retiring ones and any other living ex-leaders of the province, at the handing-over ceremony of the age-sets. Each company was further divided into platoons. After raids the retired leaders divided the spoil among the warriors and took part of it for themselves. Only in ceremonial do the companies retain their old form of four regimental divisions.

The regimental system thus cuts across the territorial organization within a province and it breaks it up for the very important social activity of raiding. The province not only acts as a whole in its modern offensive organization, but this organization is independent of local divisions within a province and its leadership is based on a different principle from the territorial principle which determines juridical authority. This fact, among others, enables us to understand how the cohesion of people occupying wide areas has been maintained in spite of a diffuse distribution and absence of any developed chieftainship and central administration. The existence of two organizing mechanisms in the political structure gives it a peculiar character and makes political relations more complex. With the old military organization the political structure must have been even more complicated. In recent times, even if the offensive military organization was not based on the territorial system, a whole province acted jointly in raids, but in olden times each pair of regiments acted independently, so that, since in every village and shire there were members of all four regiments, the regimental system cut across residential ties in these local communities.

Cutting across both the territorial and regimental systems is the age-set system of which Dr. Peristiany gives a detailed account. Every Kipsigis is initiated into an age-set (*ipinda*).

Boys are now initiated from 14 to 18 years of age and whenever there are a sufficient number of them in a district to form a group of from five to ten. Till recently, however, the age was from 20 to 30 and the initiation ceremonies were held every seven years. During the period of seclusion, for about nine months, the initiates live in a hut in the bush. Girls are initiated to adult status by clitoridectomy and are married shortly afterwards and are thereby merged into their husbands' age-sets.



The boys, by being initiated into an age-set, enter at the same time into the age-grade of warriorhood. There are three age-grades: boyhood, warriorhood, and elderhood. During his period as a warrior a youth can bear arms, raid, hunt, go to dances and festivals, cohabit with sweethearts, and marry a wife. Boys do not have these privileges and after a set has passed into the grade of elderhood its members sacrifice most of them, though they are then permitted to drink beer.

As shown in the diagram above, there are seven *ipinwek*, age-sets, and as the names are repeated they form an age-cycle.

Each age-set is segmented into divisions, each of which has a nickname (*katchaet*) which distinguishes it. Before the Kimnyige age-set there were only three such divisions.

Nowadays there may be as many as seven. It is not clear why there are more in one set than in another, on what basis segmentation is made, or whether the segments have any specific functions and interrelations. It is possible that in the old days each segment consisted of the boys initiated every seven years, but there are some objections to this interpretation.

Each set lasted from fifteen to twenty years—the period is uncertain and probably varied—the rule being that the set in the warrior grade retained that status until the first batch of the sons of the previous set but one had been initiated. Thus, when the first sons of the Chuma age-set have been initiated into the Kipkoymet set, the Sawe become elders. A boy may not be initiated into the set following that of his father, but is generally initiated into the next set but one, though sometimes into the next set but two. Most sons of Chuma will be Kipkoymet, though some may be Kablelach. There is, thus, a tendency for the space between alternate sets to constitute a generation, though the correspondence is not exact. The warriors try to retain their status as long as possible, but the set directly senior to them, consisting of the fathers of the youths who wish to be initiated and who, in the old days, would have been between 20 and 30 years of age, bring pressure to bear on the warriors to make them consent to the new set's being initiated and to retire to the status of elders. A very old man is instrumental, by persuasion, in achieving this result.

The end of one *ipinda* and the commencement of the next is brought about by the *saget ap eito* (the strangling of the bull) ceremony, which is performed when the first batch of newly-circumcised youths comes out of seclusion. The last act of initiation to manhood is thus the passing of the warrior set into the grade of elderhood and the entry of the set of initiates into the grade of warriorhood. Sot and Waldai provinces had their own "handing-over" ceremonies and Peelkut and Puret provinces had a joint ceremony. In the ceremony the initiates are grouped into four companies, each of which consists of those who are members of one of the four regiments.

As it was the set in the warrior grade which carried out raids, the old Kipsigis offensive organization thus consisted

INTRODUCTION

of eight armies, two to each province, and each army consisted of the age-set in the warrior age-grade distributed into two regiments. The age-sets were thus segmented for military purposes by the regimental system and the regiments were stratified by the age-set system. That section of an age-set which was also a cross-section of a regiment, and that section of a regiment which was a segment of the age-set structure, was a military company (*kwanet*). The diagram below represents the organization of a province. The Kipkoymet age-set is in the grade of warriorhood and the four shaded squares are the four companies of the two provincial armies. Only two companies used to go on raids at the same time because the regiments operated in pairs. As explained, a new organization was later adopted and the provincial army (*luget*) was arranged into four companies which included members of all four regiments.

REGIMENTS					
AGE-SETS	ARMY I		ARMY II		
	Kipkayge	Ngetunyo	Kasanet	Kebeni	
Maina					GRADE OF ELDERS
Chuma					
Sawe					
Kipkoymet					GRADE OF WARRIORS
Kablalach					
Kimnyige					GRADE OF BOYS
Nyonge					

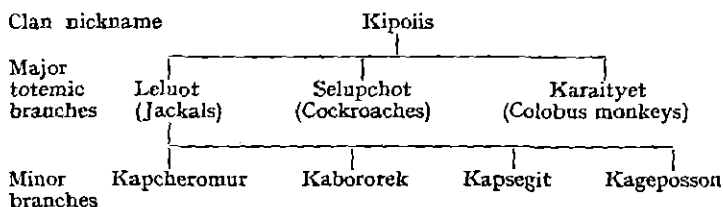
There are few specific reciprocal obligations between members of the same age-set but they have an egalitarian status in respect to one another, as is shown in their behaviour at feasts and in their participation in dancing, courtship, hunting, fighting, etc. A man cannot have sexual relations with, or marry, a daughter of an age-mate. When he marries he must summon his age-mates to a beer party and present his bride to them. In the old days when a set came out of initiation they built in each village a clubhouse in which age-mates, and only age-mates, up

to twenty warriors, slept with their sweethearts. To-day these huts are much smaller, being for the household or even for the simple family. Each has a leader who has to maintain order in it. Men of one set have an attitude of respect towards men of senior sets.

It is clear that the age-set system of the Kipsigis has very great political importance. It cuts across provincial boundaries giving common groups for all the major territorial divisions of Kipsigisland and even of the whole Nandi-speaking aggregate of peoples, for a Kipsigis who enters Nandiland at once fits into the set which corresponds to his own and is accepted as a member of it. In each province it provides, together with the regimental system, which it also cuts across, the offensive organization, and the two institutions are largely independent of the local organization of the province and operate irrespective of it in their own political and ceremonial spheres. Having noted the way in which behaviour is controlled by membership of local groups, regiments, and age-sets, we shall not be surprised to find that the dispersed Kipsigis clans have little political significance.

The Kipsigis clan (*oret*) is a totemic non-exogamous group of persons who have a common nickname and consider themselves to be agnates, believing that they have a common ancestor. Clansmen cannot, however, trace their relationship to one another genealogically. Most clans are split into two or three branches which we call major branches, one of which is the more numerous and dominant. Thus the main stem of the clan presented below is the Leluot, but there are two other major branches, the Solupchot and the Karaityet. These branches have their distinct totems (*tiondo*)—animal, vegetable, and atmospheric phenomena—from which they take their names, and when they are not further divided they are, as Solupchot and Karaityet below, exogamous groups. Some major branches, however, are divided into minor branches, e.g. the Leluot into the four divisions shown beneath, and it is then these minor branches, having the same totem, which are the exogamous units and not the major branch, from which they spring. Thus in the diagram any of the totemic major branches can intermarry. Also any of the minor branches of the

Leluot can intermarry. But a Kapcheromur cannot marry a Kapcheromur. The exogamous group of kinsmen, whether it be a major or a minor branch of the clan, is known as the *kot-ap-chi*, people of the hut.



Some clans have no major branches but the clan divides directly into exogamous minor branches. Some clans do not appear to divide at all and are presumably exogamous units. Though members of major and minor branches are supposed to have common ancestors these are not generally known. Even the minor branches cannot correctly be called lineages, for their members cannot always establish their genealogical relationship to one another.

Each totemic segment of a clan has a nickname associated with its totem, but all can use the nickname of the dominant branch, which is the most widely known. This dominant branch is, as it were, the main stem from which the other branches have grown. All clansmen have the same earmark for their cattle. If a man kills a clansman no compensation can be paid. But the clans are not localized, being dispersed all over Kipsigisland, and have little solidarity, no leadership, and no specific functions.

The *kot-ap-chi*, the largest exogamous group of agnates, has a relative position in clan structure, its range being determined by the degree of structural segmentation that has taken place. It is the largest agnatic group with clearly defined functions. Not only may a man not marry into his own *kot-ap-chi*, but neither he, his siblings, nor his descendants for several generations, may marry into the *kot-ap-chi* of his wife. Members of a *kot-ap-chi* must assist one another in difficulties of various kinds, e.g. if any one of them is destitute. Also blood-wealth is subscribed by the whole *kot-ap-chi*, and they may assist in payment for other

torts, but members of the clan belonging to other *kot-ap-chi* are not asked to contribute as they are only *ortanyit*, distant agnates. Likewise blood-wealth is distributed among the *kot-ap-chi* which has lost a member. On the other hand, although the clan does not contribute blood-wealth the cattle of any clansman of a homicide can be seized by the injured party, because they all have the same clan mark. In other words, outsiders see the clan as an unsegmented whole, but clansmen tend to see themselves as exclusive segments.

To be clearly distinguished from the *kot-ap-chi* are the *mechegeren*. They are not a social group but a kinship category of persons in relation to any given person. A man's *mechegeren* are all persons who can trace their descent from his great-great-grandfather through either males or females, i.e. it is a cognatic category with a time-depth of five generations. We may call this category the kindred. A man may not marry a woman, according to the type of kinship link between them, until after the second or third generation is reached from the pair from whom they are both descended. A man's kindred are supposed to assist him in harvesting and to help him if his cattle die, and so forth.

C	L	A	N
Other totemic segments	Totemic segment (<i>tiondo</i>)	Close paternal kin (<i>kot-ap-chi</i>)	Close maternal kin
K I N D R E D (<i>mechegeren</i>)			

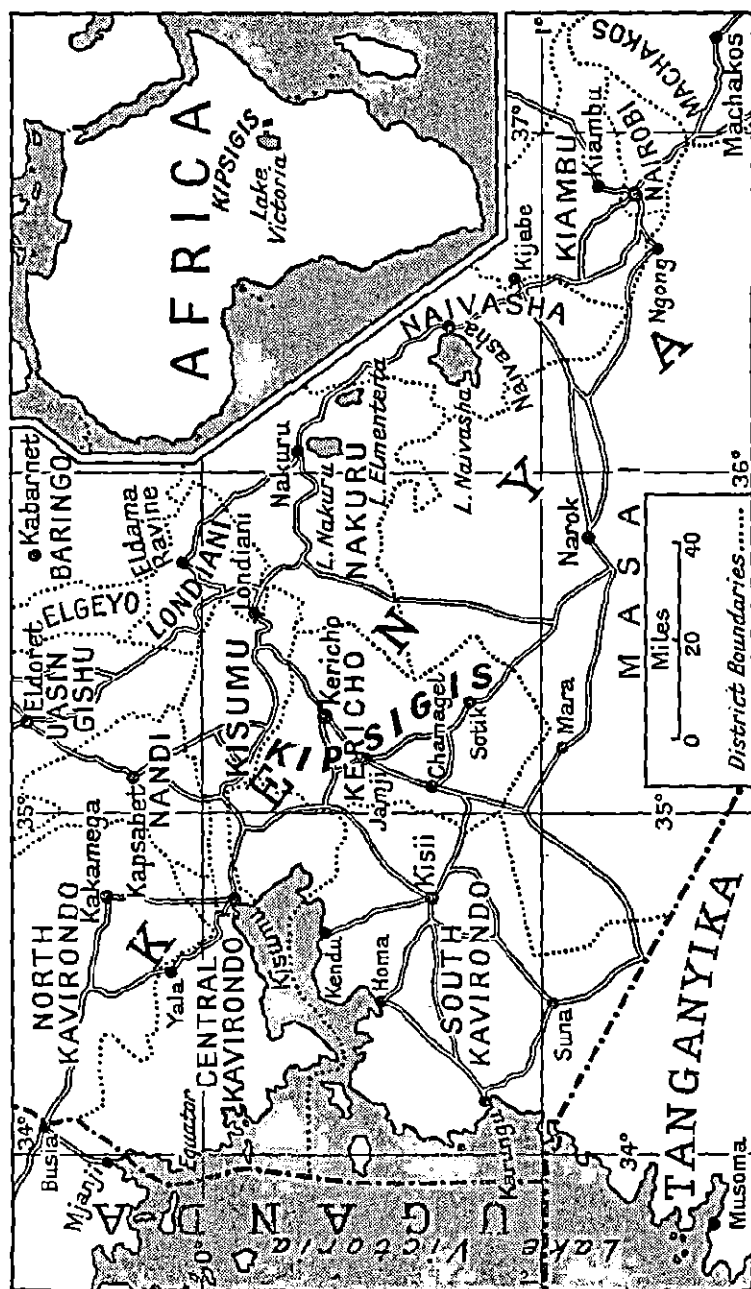
Dr. Peristiany's account enables us to illustrate a Kipsigis' kinship affiliations as above. The diagram shows his agnatic relations in a large clan with the full range of segmentation. He has his close paternal kin (*kot-ap-chi*), his totemic clan segment (*tiondo*, totem), and his clan (described by the *katchaet*, praise-name), comprising other totemic segments. All these are social groups and groups of agnates. He also has his kindred, his paternal and maternal relatives (*mechegeren*). This is not a social group, but a category of cognatic

relationships in respect of him alone. Of the agnatic groups easily the most important is the *kot-ap-chi*. This has a very restricted genealogical structure, three to four generations of agnatic ascent being the maximum to which a Kipsigis can count ; and the name of the ancestor of the group is only known if it is embodied in the name of the group—often it refers to their place of origin or to some action of their ancestor.

The *kot-ap-chi*, paternal kinsmen, do not all live in the same village, or even in the same shire, and their families do not, therefore, form in any way a corporate joint family. Indeed, Dr. Peristiany stresses that it is the residential tie between members of the village community rather than any tie between members of kinship groups that furnishes the dominant values in the daily life of Kipsigis, though, doubtless, members of a village have cognatic and affinity relations to one another as well as residential relations.

The territorial system, the regimental system, and the age-set system are not based on the clan system, though they may operate to some extent through specific kinship forms—e.g. a man belongs to his father's regiment—and the form and functions of the Kipsigis clan and of its segments are to be understood in the light of the relatively more important corporate activities of these other social groups. Dr. Peristiany has clearly shown the political functions of these groups. The territorial system which he has described is certainly the fundamental set of relations in the social organization of the Kipsigis at the present day, and probably also in past days, and it is by reference to that system that his book can be most profitably read.

Before I read Dr. Peristiany's book I had made a careful analysis of all the literature on the Nandi-speaking peoples. I have since read that analysis in the light of his account, and have found that his research disposes of many contradictions between earlier authorities and solves many problems arising from their descriptions. But comparative studies have to be made from the literature, and not by reading interpretations into it, and I conclude by saying that Dr. Peristiany's work will only reach its full value when further research into the Nandi-speaking peoples is conducted on the basis of his discoveries.



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Kipsigis Highlands lie between the Equator Latitude $0^{\circ} 9'$ to 1° South and Longitude E 35° to E $35^{\circ} 30'$ approximately, the altitude of the plateau varying between 5,000 and 7,500 feet. The tribal reserve covers an area of 821 square miles.

The Kipsigis, also called Kipsigi or Kipsigisiek, are better known to the European as Lumbwa, a misnomer of unknown origin, as none of the neighbouring tribes seems to be responsible for this name. They belong to the same stock as the Nandi, Keyo, Kamasia (Tugen), Turkana, and are the numerically strongest representatives of the Kenya Nilo-Hamites, their tribe numbering 80,000 members.¹

The Kipsigis are dolichocephalic, and comparatively thin-lipped and leptirrhine, of a light brown or copper-red colour and are of tall stature.

According to the traditions of the tribe, their present land was only reached after a long migration. Their original home was "in the country of Tto near Lake Chamus". This I identify with the plateau of the En-Chemuss, lying between the River Do and Lake Baringo, over 60 miles north of the present Kipsigis Reserve. The migration must have taken place a very long time ago, as during the Chuma age-set² the Kipsigis were in possession of their present district. This tradition goes on to say that they left the land of their ancestors because they were suffering from severe drought, and the whole tribe was on the move in search of better pasture lands. When they arrived in Peelkut, they met with the Sirikwa, who were the original autochtones, occupying

¹ Including those living on European farms. They are distributed in nearly 23,000 huts.

² *Vide* table of ipinwek.

the land. The Kipsigis stopped at the Tulu ap Kipsigis (mountain of the Kipsigis), a little to the north of their present Reserve, gathered their forces and attacked the Sirikwa. Having been victorious in their first battle, the Kipsigis infiltrated slowly into the country, gradually ousting the Sirikwa, until they exterminated them. They then came into contact with the Masai, but after long and severe fighting vanquished them also and occupied their most southern position, between the Nyangoris and Amala rivers.

The Kipsigis consider the Nandi,¹ the Keyo, the Tugen and the Suk as their brothers, but refuse this title to the Masai and the Turkana, whom they call *punik*, i.e. enemies. With the above-named brother tribes, although they do not come under a common authority, each tribe being independent, not only do they intermarry, but they also pay the compensation cattle, tug' a' muget, if they kill one of their members. This is the easiest way, and the best touchstone for finding out which of the Nilo-Hamites of Kenya consider themselves as belonging to one ethnic group, as, when they do, they cannot kill one of the members of this "family" without having to pay the compensation. This payment is only effected towards people considered as belonging to one's own blood, and no war did ever take place² between two tribes bound by the rules of the tug' a' muget.³ In the pages which follow, I have used the term "Nilo-Hamitic tribes of Kenya" as covering only the brother tribes of the Kipsigis-Nandi, Suk, Keyo, and Tugen.

Kipsigis land is divided into four emotinwek (districts), four being the sacred number: Peelkut, Waldai, Pureti, and Sot.⁴ Each emet used to go to war alone and hold ceremonies

¹ The Kipsigis belong to the same group as the Bari and Lotuko speaking tribes of the Sudan. V. Seligman: *Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan*, p. 14.

² According to my Kipsigis informants.

³ Cattle given by the murderer's family to the family of the deceased.

⁴ Peelkut from peel = warm and kut = mouth, as it is a good district for grazing. Waldai from Wal = change and tai = right hand. Sot from a hero called Kipsot. Pureti from the Tulu ab Pureti mountain: origin of name unknown. Sot is also called Sotik.



MY TENT IN A KIPKOYBON MAIZE FIELD



TRAVELLING THROUGH KIPSIGILAND

independently of its neighbours. The Government was composed of the Kiruogik neo (the Great Judges), the Poysiek ab puriosiek (the elders of the army group), the four Kiptaynek ab puriosiek (army leaders), and the Kiptayat neo nebo murenk (the Great Leader of the warriors). The tribe never had a common chief or a divine king. After the pacification of the country, the election of the army leaders was discontinued. The only civil authority now is that of the Great Judges, who rule over a group of villages (kokwotinwek).

The famous laibon were foreign Masai witch-doctors (oloiboni) who had fled from their home land and taken refuge with the Nandi and Kipsigis. Their authority over those tribes was short-lived. They were hated and feared by the people, and the Government has finally heard their voice, rounded up all the laibon and moved them out of the Reserve—a drastic but necessary action, as they used to bleed the people, and were the instigators of the greatest number of *organized* cattle-thefts.

The religion of the Kipsigis is, as far as I could ascertain, *monotheistic*, as Asis or Chebtelil¹ (the Sun) is the only deity to which they regularly pray. He is the Supreme Being and the creator of all things on earth, men, animals, and vegetable life.

The social divisions of the tribe are very numerous. A man is first a member of a patrilineal family, the members of which are called kot ap chi, are said to be descended from a common ancestor² and form a subdivision of the oret (clan). At the age of 14–18 the Kipsigis will be initiated, and from this moment he becomes a member of an Ipinda (age-set), bound to his fellows by definite rules of conduct. He will be born into a regiment (puriet), membership of which is also regulated by patrilineal rules. Of all those groups

¹ It is interesting to note that a similar word for God is used by the Ingassana of Darfung and at Jebel Midob, as noted by Professor Seligman and Dr. Evans-Pritchard: *Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan*, p. 16.

² Who is not worshipped.

regulating social behaviour the most important now is the *kokwet*, the territorial unit which co-operates in the work of the fields and gives assistance in case of distress.

The Kipsigis are inordinately proud of their social divisions and of the mass of tradition and myth with which they are associated, and they show an aloof and overbearing disposition towards all *punik* (strangers). They have a definite code of moral values, and those who come nearest to their own valuation are those rising highest in their esteem. First and foremost a man must be a warrior; but, if he also accepts the Kipsigis rules of *saiset*,¹ he is recognized as a gentleman. The Masai, who are the only neighbouring tribe living up to their standards, although considered as dangerous enemies, are highly respected.

The first contact of the Kipsigis with Europeans was an inauspicious one. A road was being opened from Sotik to Uganda in 1899, and the administration tried to force the natives to work on it. This they refused to do, as they consider all forms of heavy labour as undignified, and they assumed a frankly hostile attitude. The next occurrence of importance was the Kipsigis punitive expedition of 1905, which succeeded in rounding up and confiscating 2,000 head of cattle in Sotik alone, also the collective punishment imposed on Peelkut and Puret in 1913, and amounting to 16,000 rupees. These severe punishments struck a heavy blow, from which the simple economics of the Kipsigis took some time to recover and, in spite of the enlightened and friendly attitude of modern administration, the Kipsigis refuse to forget their grudges. Their attitude towards all Europeans is one of aloofness, of reticence, and of extreme suspicion.

Since the Kipsigis have come into contact with European civilization, many of their old customs have broken down,

¹ To make *Saiset* is to ask for mercy when vanquished in a fight by throwing a handful of grass on the opponent, or by grasping the sacred altar, called *Mabwai*. *Vide* p. 171.

and are now undergoing a process of re-adaptation. The most affected of all their institutions is the family, where the authority of the father is reduced to only the shadow of what it must have been in years past, when the entire household was dependent upon him, and when none of his sons could marry without his father's aid. Nowadays many of his children, from the age of 8 or 9, go and work on European farms, not only without his permission, but in spite of his disapproval. The administration has also done its best to check what they considered as an expression of Kipsigis immorality, viz. the custom of those people of keeping men's houses, where the warriors can have free sexual relations with the girls. With this purpose in view, it has been decided that the girls should go to initiation much younger than of old, when they used to go at the age of 20 or 24. Now that this age has been decreased to 15, or even 13,¹ a major evil has become apparent. The girls always go to the singroina, but are married immediately after coming out of initiation, as is the custom of the Kipsigis. Thus, at the age of 13 or 15, they often become the wives of men many decades their seniors, and this is a factor of instability in Kipsigis marriage. If the young girl cannot settle down happily with her husband, she will run away to a younger lover, or will turn prostitute. The severe punishment of injjoget,² which acted as a strong deterrent to many breaches of the social code, has now had to be abandoned, with the result that the Kipsigis, who are certainly not a law abiding tribe by nature (if such a tribe exists anywhere!), find it easier to break their own law. But even without immediate material sanctions, Kipsigis custom can be enforced in most cases by social reprobation, finding its final expression in the collective curse of the inhabitants of the kokwet.

¹ They have also been influenced by the abolition of the boys' saget-ap-eito ceremony. *Vide* p. 38.

² Stoning to death.

CHAPTER II

INITIATION

Circumcision, with its corollary of secret rituals, is one of the key customs of Kipsigis culture.

There are, I think, in all societies some ceremonies and some types of behaviour which must be adhered to, if one desires to be considered a member of that community. Baptism in the Christian religion, circumcision according to the Talmud and the Koran, followed by their specific rituals, are *sine qua non* initiation ceremonies which one has to undergo, if one wants to participate in that aggregate of customs which represent a culture.

Four elements unite to make the great Tumdo ¹ an outstanding event in the life of a Kipsigis.

(1) Circumcision, without which no marriage or sexual relations ² can be established with other members of the tribe.

(2) Initiation into the secret rituals of the tribe. This is one of the strongest links uniting not only the Kipsigis, but all the Nilo-Hamitic tribes of Kenya among themselves.

(3) Teaching in tribal custom received at the hands of the Motireniki and the elders; also infliction of bodily pain to harden the physical endurance of the youngsters.

(4) A *rite de passage* separating childhood from adult membership of the tribe.

To distinguish an uninitiated from an initiated Kipsigis, the latter will be referred to as Kipsigisindet, the ending *indet* denoting "one that is strong in something" and thus, here, a real Kipsigis.

¹ Tumdo or Tumda = ceremony. When "tumdo" is used alone, it means the ceremony and thus initiation.

² For the boys.



KIPSIGIS YOUTH

PLATE V.



AN INFLUENTIAL WARRIOR, THE SON OF ARAP TERER

THE INITIATION OF BOYS

There are in the Kipsigis Tumdo, six main ceremonies :

- (1) Rotyinotet = A secret ritual followed by circumcision.
- (2) Labet ap Eun = " Dipping " of the hands to purify them.
- (3) Tienjjinet = Singing to them.
- (4) Kayaet = Casting off of uncleanness.
- (5) Yatet ap oret = Opening of the way (to manhood).
- (6) Tilet ap Kirokwet = Cutting of the stick followed by shaving of the head.

These ceremonies, although considered by the Kipsigis as being part of one integral whole and studied here as such, must not be separated in our mind from the many other ceremonies which a Kipsigis will have to undergo during the course of his life. At every stage of his existence the Kipsigis must perform a certain ceremony or be initiated into some special duties related to his age,¹ but the importance of the great Tumdo is so outstanding as to make it necessary for me to discuss it under a separate head.

I. *Rotyinotet*

Nowadays, when in any given area, there are a sufficient number of boys ready to go to initiation, an initiation festival will be held ; but I was told that, as far as the Nyonge age-set, initiations were only held every seven years. An initiation ceremony can be held in any month of any year, with the exception of August, the " black rain " month, during which nothing new is undertaken.² It is also necessary that plenty of maize and eleusine grain should be available to feed the initiates.

The age of the initiates varies with individual circumstances, such as the proximity of a festival, the abundance of grain, the death of a boy's brothers, which makes it desirable that he should marry and have grandchildren, and

¹ Some are studied under birth, marriage, etc.

² It is also said that no initiation is held during the second year after the flowering of the setyot plant. As the setyot flowers once every eight years, I was not present so as to check this information. The eight years' cycle of the setyot can also be correlated with Hollis's seven years initiation cycle, but there is no definite information on this point.

also a boy's own impatience to go to initiation. It usually varies between 14-18. When the father has decided to send his son, a reliable old man will be selected. He will undertake to feed the boys during their seclusion and to look after them. Between this old man and the boys, a definite relationship is established. They call him pamongo (father) and his wife iyoo (mother); but this symbolic kinship terminology is only used between him and his wife and his pamongo and iyoo and does not spread to the other members of their respective families. The pamongo will receive, after the boys have come out, a female goat or a ewe, both called *chemngabait*, as the equivalent of the food he has given to the initiates, and this animal must leave behind it posterity, as if it dies without young, the father will be obliged to replace it *ad infinitum*.

The boys, numbering usually from five to ten, will now¹ go round the homes of their paternal relations and to their mother's brother and will invite them to the feast. Meanwhile their pamongo will help them to build a hut in which they will live until the last day of Tumdo. This hut is called *menjit* and is built in the bush, but near the pamongo's residence.

The great day has now come. In the hut of each initiate great quantities of porridge have been prepared, and the guests are assembled. The young men have painted their body with white and red clay, and the women carry tall sticks, from which the leaves and branches have not been trimmed off. The initiate's female paternal relations and his father are decked with garlands of the sacred senendet creeper. When they are all ready, a little after sunset, they move to the house of some other initiate. Everybody now forms a circle, and the boys in the middle give an exhibition of their dancing and sing alternately the praises of their sweethearts.² The boy's maternal uncle will now anoint

¹ One month before Rotyinotet.

² It will be seen from sections 6 and 7 that the boys cannot sleep in the singroina with them before coming out of initiation.

him on the forehead with butter.¹ After about an hour of this display, everybody moves to a friend's house, until all the initiates with their respective parties are grouped at some distance from the *menjit* initiation hut. A great fire is now lit, round which the spectators sit, while the warriors dance and sing the *chepkotilet*.² Everybody is in very high spirits. During the night tribal custom is not enforced with its usual rigour, and, although there is nothing in the form of a promiscuous orgy, married women are said to be free to dispense their favours on whom they please. On this point consensus of opinion is universal.

I was present at this ceremony, but did not witness these acts, though they were repeatedly pointed out to me by the elders. The only light was provided by the fire, and the surrounding bush, into which the couples were said to retire, was as dark as night.

At day-break the boys are led by the *motirenik*³ to the hut⁴ of an old man, and they go inside and are entirely stripped of their clothes. In the middle of the hut a corridor has been built with sticks, and all its surface and its roof have been covered with stinging-nettles (siek). This passage is about 3 yards long, 3 feet wide and 3½ feet high, and is called *kimusanget*.

One *motiryot* leads the way through this passage, and the boys follow him in single file with the other *motiryot* closing the line. The *motirenik* also are naked except for a piece of

¹ This and the ceremony of extracting the two lower teeth are the only ceremonies in which the maternal uncle (*mama*) plays any conspicuous role.

² The words of the *chepkotilet* are so archaic that not even the old men can make any sense out of them. They usually have some cryptic meaning, as in the following example: "The axe that breaks is not finished, but may be sharpened again," meaning that once the elders have retired, the youngsters will take their place. Here is one with a clear meaning: "Be cruel during war; strike to kill." Unhappily very few of them are translatable, and I am satisfied that the greatest part of these songs is without any real significance to the living representatives of the tribe.

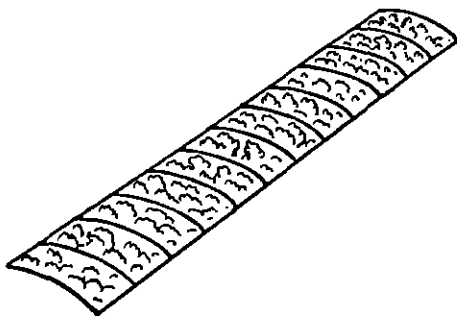
³ The two *motirenik* are the "masters of ceremonies" or "sponsors" present at most ceremonies. Vide "Religion", also *Spiritual Kinship*, pp. 114 et seq.

⁴ Not the *menjit*.

cloth or a little grass thrown on their backs. The boys, of course, have no protection.

On emerging at the other end, they go in the same formation round the inside of the hut and then re-enter the *kimusanget*. This they repeat four times, as four is the sacred number of the Kipsigis and always occurs in boys' ceremonies.¹

The action of the stinging-nettles is not to render them insensible to the pain following circumcision, but is said to stop the flow of blood after the operation. Its most important *raison d'être* is the testing of the boys' stamina and reaction



to physical pain. Not one of them, during this and the following tortures, must utter the slightest cry of pain, as round the hut are sitting the elders who are ready to ridicule the boy if he does so. Nobody may witness the *rotyinotet* ceremonies who has not been previously initiated into them.² It is the most secret of all initiation ceremonies.

The chorus now sings the *Chepkotilet* song, and the boys break up the *kimusanget*. They are then grouped together near the entrance, and one of the *motirenik* will ask one of the boys to follow him to the darkest corner of the hut, where a great number of monkey skins are heaped. He tells

¹ For girls it is usually the number 3.

² The only exception is that a man or woman whose brothers and sisters have died may witness the ceremonies of the other sex.



PROFILE OF A GIRL

the boy that under the skins is hidden a ferocious being, with a huge penis, and proceeds to ask the boy if he has ever had intercourse with a woman. The initiate denies this, as he is bound to do, since an uncircumcised boy is said to soil all women with whom he has had sexual intercourse, and to make them barren. The motiryot will now threaten the boy that, if he does not reveal his sexual life at once, the "thing" beneath the skins will come that very same night while he sleeps and perform sodomy on him; "his penis is so huge that you will surely die." The man who is hidden beneath the skin begins now to move, uttering ferocious grunts of "Moo-moo", hence his name of *Arap Mogoss*.¹ The boy is by now thoroughly terrified. The motiryot takes him apart and asks him the same question in private and, if his answer is still negative, he leads him back to the heap of skins. There, behind *Arap Mogoss*'s back, and the skins covering him, hide two more men, one with a squeaky feminine voice and the other holding a stick in a narrow hole where water has been previously introduced. If the boy denies copulation, the feminine voice issues from the skin, saying: "Only last night you were sleeping with me; do not deny it. You were holding my legs so fast that you nearly broke them; do not deny it," and so on, giving more and more details about the boy's physique and the alleged intercourse, while the other man, by rotating the stick in the wet hole, produces a sound imitating that of coitus. The boy is then flattered by the motiryot: "You are a clever boy; you can surely tell us what this is": and if he does, his lies may be found out.

For every woman with whom the initiate admits having had intercourse, a warrior will take a small stick in his hand, then go to the top of a hill, face the rising sun, and throw it into the valley, shouting at the top of his voice, so as to be heard by the village: "So and so has had intercourse with a woman, so I am throwing this; 'ehool; ehool'." It is said that

¹ Also called *Arap Kimoss*.

the effect of this is to lift the uncleanness from the woman, and, if she has become barren, to enable her to bear again.

If the boy still denies having had intercourse with a woman, he is told to slap Arap Mogoss, who has been trying to lead him into error ; but, when he attempts to beat him, his motiryot holds him and takes him back to his place.

After the Arap Mogoss trial the boys are led to the fire-place and are told to rush through the fire, as the *Majjaita*¹ is hidden there, and if they succeed in coming through, they will emerge circumcised from the fire ; but when they attempt to do this, those present frustrate the attempt.

One by one the initiates are then led to a stool which is strewn with nettles. The motiryot then catches hold of the boy's head so that he cannot see and tells him to sit on it, as he will arise circumcised. When he sits on the stool the unexpected pain makes him jump up again, but he is made to sit down and rise again four times.

The first part of the ordeal is now over, and while the elders discuss the courage shown by each boy, the initiates collect the sticks and nettles of the *kimusanget* and leave the hut. On the way the motirenik instructs them to hide their bundles in the bush, as they must not be found and touched by the hands of women or of uninitiated boys. The party then proceeds in a line in the direction of the *menjit*. The boy at the head of the file is the one whose father belongs to the oldest *ipinda*, and he is called *Kiboretiet*. After him the boys follow in the order of their father's *ipinweek*. The line is closed by a boy called *koyoûmgoi*, whose father's *ipinda* is as ancient as that of *kiborétiet*.² Thus, in the army, the places of honour are, during the fight, those in the front and, after the cattle has been

¹ Sacred knife with which circumcision is performed.

² When, as a rule, the initiates' fathers belong to the same *Ipinda* only the subdivision of that *Ipinda* will be taken into consideration for the choice of the *Koyoûmgoi* and the *Kiborétiet*. There are also cases when between the initiates' fathers a whole *Ipinda* may intervene. *Vide* p. 31, note 2.

captured, those in the rear, so as to protect the spoils and the flanks of the army.

The boys now proceed to where the *Poyot ap Tumda*¹ is standing and are told to look up. As they do so, the Poyot makes a mark on the foreskin of the penis, indicating the actual spot where the operation will be performed. The initiates will then sit down, each having behind him a man of his father's generation. Opposite them will be their own father or one of their elder brothers, who very often puts a stick in the ground and tells the boy to look at it steadfastly during the operation; otherwise he will be beaten by that very stick.

The Poyot ap Tumda is usually too old and shaky to operate and an elder, known for his skill, takes his place.² He passes down the line and operates each boy with the majjaita knife, while the boy's head is held back by the man kneeling behind him. The poyot operates by cutting off the part of the foreskin which has been previously marked, but he is careful not to trim all the skin off. In the remaining skin he makes a slit, through which he pulls the penis, and he then fastens the skin on each side with a thorn. This thorn will come out of its own accord when the wound has healed, but two *bourrelets* usually remain to mark the incision it has made.

The boys, during the operation and the previous trials, must not show the slightest outward appearance of pain, and in the immense majority of cases they succeed in so doing. The girl friend of the boy will have given him before the beginning of the ceremony, something she had been wearing, like a bracelet or a necklace. If the boy goes through the ceremony to the satisfaction of the elders, he will return the amulet to the girl, and it will become one of her most cherished possessions. But if the boy cries, he must throw

¹ The "Elder of Ceremony". Vide p. 216.

² The part of Poyot ap Tumda is not a paid one, and he only partakes of the meat and beer. The operator is paid 3s. by the father of each initiate. The motirenik are given a bunch of snuff.

the amulets he has disgraced into the bush, and his nickname from this day will be that of "coward". He will find, when he comes out of initiation, that all, men and women, will shrink from him, and his life will be one of continual humiliation; so that eventually he may make up his mind to move to a far-away place, where nobody has heard of his shame.

At the huts of the successful boys great rejoicings will take place. As soon as the good news arrive, the high-pitched ceremonial *i-ri-ri-ri* is shouted. This cry is called *siim*. The liquid porridge, *musarek*, prepared on the eve of the ceremony, is now eaten, and all the family and guests dance and make merry.

The old man who has undertaken to feed them will now take the initiates to the *menjit*, where *musarek* has been prepared for them. The uncleanness of the initiates is now emphasized to them, as it is considered greater than before circumcision. They cannot touch what they drink or eat, but must feed with their mouths out of the *moinget*,¹ which is the hollowed bark of a tree, and they are forbidden to touch anything held as sacred by the *Kipsigis*, such as a sword, a bleeding arrow, or cow dung. They are told that if they touch either their porridge or their milk, the cow will give no more milk and the fields will wither; and their uncleanness is such that they are allowed to drink milk and eat meat the same day—a great crime at any other period of their lives.

The boys will remain in that condition of ceremonial uncleanness for a month, until the day of the *Labet ap eun* ceremony.

2. *The Labet ap Eun*

This ceremony of "dipping the hands" is performed about a month after the boys have entered the *menjit*. Its purpose is to enable the initiates to touch things which were hitherto

¹ And later use leaves for this purpose.

forbidden to them, and also, as with all initiation ceremonies, to instruct them in certain duties.

Each boy is taken out of the *menjit* by the *motiryot* in the late afternoon and told that in former years one of his family's cows has been stolen. The word used here for family is *kot ap chi*, describing the paternal family in a wide sense. The thief, the initiate is told, is hiding in the bush, and he must go to fight him and bring the cow back. The boy is armed with a mock shield and a knife made of wood, and the recent tracks of a cow are shown to him. The initiate follows the trail and is suddenly confronted with a fully armed warrior, whom he fights, and in so doing breaks all his weapons. Once he has sufficiently demonstrated his valour he is led back to the *menjit*, where the families and their guests have arrived with great quantities of *musarek*.¹ The boy is now asked to kneel down and drink out of a *kerebet*. As he does so, he is stung by the nettles with which the *kerebet* (basket) has been bordered. He is then seized by the warriors, who beat and sting his temples with the *kimelet* plant. The better the behaviour of the boy has been up till now and the more popular he is, the less he will be made to suffer.

The *moinget* full of water is now placed in front of him, and he is told to dip his hands in it. As he does so, he notices that in the water there are seven articles :

- (1) The *majjaita* = sacred knife.
- (2) The *rotwet* = sword.
- (3) The *loynet* = bleeding arrow.
- (4) The *katet* = needle.
- (5) The *ngatatia* = dung.
- (6) The *njenda* = solid salt.
- (7) The *ayuet* = axe.

This is an indication that from this day he may touch those things without soiling them.

The boy, up to now, has lived in absolute seclusion, making

¹ Liquid porridge.

bows and arrows with his comrades. From the day of Labet ap eun he is allowed to roam about in solitary paths where he can avoid meeting women and to hunt small animals and birds ; but he must take care to disguise his features with clay, so that none may recognize him. He must also return each night to sleep in the menjit. This seclusion is also enforced by the warriors who come outside the menjit at night and use their bull-roarers to frighten the boys into remaining indoors. When the initiates ask what the noise they heard in the night was, they are told that it is a great wild animal which has its headquarters in the bush, outside their menjit.

3. *Tienjjinet* = *Singing to them*

The third ceremony in the initiation cycle takes place from one to two months after Labet ap eun.

The boys are now being visited by the warriors and the elders who teach them the customs and the moral code of the tribe. They are told that they must not lie nor use vile language, must respect their elders, use the correct relationship terms, love their clan and *puriel*, not to quarrel and never kill another Kipsigis, even under provocation. This teaching is emphasized by the *tienjjinet*, at which the elders come to sit with them and teach them. The boys will be sitting in a special enclosure they have built by the menjit, called *tomnet*, without permission to sleep all night, while the old men who are drinking " the beer of the Elder " ¹ will relieve each other in carrying on the teaching. The Poyot ap Tumda will then close the ceremony by spitting beer on the boys and blessing them in the name of Asis.

The boys have been taught during these last two months to sing the *kipoesit* every morning to the rising and setting sun. The song must be extremely old as no literal translation can be obtained, but it is one of those rhythmical songs

¹ Mayuek ap Poyot, the beer given by the man who feeds the boys in honour of the Poyot ap Tumda.

Ki/boesé/díyo/é
 oé/oé/oé/tióndo/ap píso
 Ká/bugar é/díyo/é
 oé/oé/oé/Ó saysach/túg ' ap/kaplím
 Kaplím/é/oíyoé
 oé/oé/oé/osaysach túg'/ap kábugar.

Kiboese (?) the animal of póeso.
Kabugar (?) drive out for capture the cattle of the Jalu.
Jalu drive out for capture the cattle of Kabugar.

Kayandaet sung to elders :

Sal purienyon { ch } *sal puriet ak oret* { ch }
Praise our puriet { ahá } praise the puriet and the clan { mm yoé }
Tech poyondet { ch } *tech poyot motiryot* { ch }
Obey the wise old man { ahá } obey the old man motiryot { mm yoé }
Sal Nandiekiok { ch } *Sal Nandiek tebe*
Praise our Nandi ² { ahá } Praise the Nandi who live
Koywe { ch }
in the stony country { mm yoé }
Tech Chorwengung { ch } *tech chorwet*
Obey your friend { ahá } obey friend (and) he
kotechimwe { ch }
will obey you ³ { mm yoé }

² It will be found that the Nandi are frequently blessed in Kipsigis ceremonies and are referred to as "our Nandi".

^a If you follow your friend's advice, he will follow yours.

Sal Tinongoy { ch } *Sal tino'p ragita we* { ch. }
 Praise the Molo forest¹ { ahá } praise { mm yoé }

Subay we leiye { ch } *Subay werchu ap*
 Greeting you boys { ahá } Greeting children of the
Kaplelkok { ch. }
 white village { mm yoé }

Sal mi pey kel { ch } *sal mi pey*
 Praise it is water down { ahá } praise it is water
Kaploin we { ch. }
 place of Kaploin { mm yoé }

Sal chebyoset { ch } *sal Kamet ab murenik* { ch. }
 Praise old mother { ahá } praise mother of warriors { mm yoé }

Subay logokyuk { ch } *subay lagok chetom*
 Greeting our children { ahá } greeting children which
konay ngal { ch. }
 yet to know words² { mm yoé }

Sal tororteg { ch } *sal toror maginyor we* { ch. }
 Praise bamboo up { ahá } praise up cannot meet { mm yoé }

Sal pun tegan { ch } *pun tegan kobwa kok* { ch. }
 Praise pass bamboo { ahá } pass bamboo to come { mm yoé }

Sal Kombero { ch } *pinikwet kibo koy* { ch. }
 Praise Kombero { ahá } country was of stone { mm yoé }

Sal timin tui { ch. } *sal timi ap*
 Praise that forest black { ahá } praise forest of
Chesolot { ch. }
 Chesolot { mm yoé }

Sal puriet { ch } *sal puriet mabwa puch* { ch. }
 Praise puriet { ahá } praise puriet not come empty³ { mm yoé }

Sal koy longét { ch } *sal koy longét*
 Praise long shield { ahá } praise long shield
makiil { ch. }
 not able to cut { mm yoé }

Kisolu Cheptuech { ch } *Kisolu Cheptuech*
 We belong Cheptuech { ahá } we belong Cheptuech
neo met { ch. }
 which big head { mm yoé }

¹ To the N.E. of the Kipsigis reserve.

² Who are not yet wise.

³ Praise, bless, the warriors so that they may not return from the battle with depleted ranks.

to beat with the muddy stick,¹ so as to foist the uncleanness on to her, the stick then being thrown away. In some clans the boy must find a woman to rape, and at this moment he will cease to be unclean. The theory that rape of a woman will cast off uncleanness is often met with in Kipsigis superstition. When they have been bitten by snakes or feel the first symptoms of syphilis, they will immediately think of rape as a potent panacea.²

The boys finally return to the menjit and are told to form *kwanaiik* (army files), each file comprising members of one *puriet*. In front of them are placed *tug' ap labot*, the little round fruit of the *labotuet*, to represent cattle, and, while the praises of their *puriet* army group are sung, they have to rush and seize as many *tug' ap labot* as possible. The greater the number they are found holding at the end, the greater their luck will be when they grow up and raid the cattle of their neighbours.

The *tarusiek* (initiates) may wander very far from the menjit after this ceremony and they may sleep in the hut of their parents; but they have to wear the ceremonial head-dress called *marangochot*, from which hangs the rare masek plant, imitating golden hair (*vide* Plate VII, p. 22). This mask is worn so that they may not be recognized by women or evil spirits. To their head-dress they add all the skins and plumes of the animals and birds they have killed, in order to show off to their friends their skill in hunting. The odour that permeates the atmosphere round them is very often nauseating.

5. *Yatet ap oret, Opening of the Way*

On the night before the ceremony, a mayuek ap Poyot³ is held at which only men are present, and in the morning the final preparations are made for the ceremony. At about

¹ This is not done in earnest.

² Some Kipsigis have been accused of trying to rape European children. They do this, not because of their strong sexual nature, but to get rid of some illness that is troubling them.

³ Beer of the Elder.

10.30 the elders build the *ormarich*.¹ This is an arch about 7 feet high, in the middle of which four to six ² sticks are placed. The *ormarich*, which is also the name of the kraal's gate, has some dung placed at its foot, as all initiation ceremonies are connected with cattle, these last constituting the tribe's most tangible form of wealth.

A little after midday the elders come out, holding the clothes the initiates are going to wear and, after turning four times round the *mabwai*,³ go straight to the bush about 200 yards away. Here the boys have been hiding out of sight of the assembled crowd of over 300 men and women.⁴ They now put on their new skins and after about two hours they emerge from the bush, led by two *motirenik*, and kneel on all fours behind the *ormarich*, facing east. The initiates are dressed in goat skins, but those of them who have lost by death at least three of the brothers and sisters next above them in age are dressed either in squirrel or blue monkey skins.⁵ This is done to attract the attention of Asis, the Sun, to the plight of their parents, so that he may protect these children from death. The skins cover the back and the face, so that the identity of the initiates may remain secret.

One of the *motirenik* is now crouching near the *ormarich* and holding two of the sticks that go through it (*vide* Plate IX, p. 26), and one of the initiates takes the place on his right hand side and holds the sticks below the grasp of the *motiryot*. Standing in front of them and facing them are two girls, each holding one of the sticks. These two girls are supposed to be the two sisters of the initiate, but more often than not, two of his relatives or friends take their place. From that day, they stand to him in the relation of sisters.⁶ These four persons beat the sticks up and down,

¹ "The narrow way" (or—oret = road, marich = narrow).

² According to the number of boys coming out.

³ Sacred shrine outside the hut.

⁴ This is a ceremony to which both sexes are invited.

⁵ From this can be guessed the enormous mortality of Kipsigis children, as three or four out of every ten initiates wear those "mourning" skins.

⁶ *Vide* pp. 114-116.

INITIATION

pounding the cow-dung with them, while the people sing :

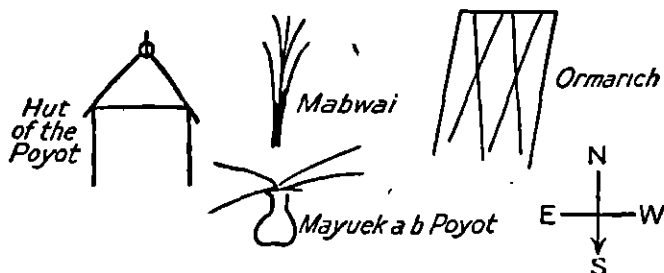
yatwon orèt, kagonyun chebkam,
open the way, my grandmother sister,

while all those present sing : aiyá, hoiyoé.

The Poyot ap Tumda will then come forward and, taking a sip out of his sacred *komda* (calabash), decorated with seretyot grass, sprays the initiate with a mist of beer.

The boy now takes two paces to his right and kneels, and another initiate comes on all fours and goes through the same ceremony.

After they have all finished the motiryot shakes the sticks with the Poyot ap Tumda. Each boy then in turn resumes his place by the ormarich. Facing him are the two



girls who have opened the way for him, and all of them, dipping both feet in the dung, smear each other's feet twice with either foot.

While this is going on, a hole is dug by the side of the mabwai, beer is put down, and all the old men and women sit round it and drink.

When all the boys have finished, they come out, not through the ormarich, but round its left side. Led by the motiryot, they go four times round the mabwai and, as they pass the Poyot ap Tumda, he sprays them with beer and blesses them, asking Asis to give them many wives, many children, and a great number of cattle. He also repeats



THE TARUSIEK WITH THE MARANGOCHOT HEADDRESS
Dead birds and rats can be seen hanging from them



GIRLS' YATET AP ORET

They are all covered in their skins and kneeling down in front of the ormarich. In the middle the motiryot (with uncovered head) is directing the girls. The "brothers" can be seen holding the sticks of the ormarich and "opening the way" for their sisters. In the foreground a woman is holding a horn full of butter ready for the anointing ceremony. The sacred Kipkandolit is stuck on top

as a final warning that they must not beat their wives,¹ and never kill a Kípsigis under any circumstances. The boys will then stand with their back to the hut, and all their female relations² arrive with cow's horns full of butter and a little seretyot on top. The boy now for the first time exposes the upper part of his face to a woman, and she immediately anoints it with butter, and sticks on it a little seretyot, the boy also putting some butter on her head. During one of the yatet ap oret, I witnessed, the sun was shining so bright, and the boys had had such enormous lumps of butter put on their heads, that when they started melting the boys had to be hurriedly removed to the interior of the hut, as many of them were blinded and almost fainting. This anointing is repeated between the boys and the Poyot ap Tumda and motirenik. When they have finished, the women all vie with each other in anointing the Poyot, whose face is hidden from sight under a mountain of butter.

The mother now presents the initiate with a stick, from which the branches have not been trimmed off, and from which usually hangs an amulet, which the initiate will wear to protect him from the "evil eye".³ Another protection against the evil eye is the hiding of their features and also the fact that underneath their main goatskin, they are dressed in women's clothes, including the *nariet* head-dress, which is a piece of colobus monkey skin, studded with large cowrie shells. During all the *rites de passage*, and especially during initiation, a man is particularly vulnerable, and every possible precaution is taken to mislead the harmful spirits which may be present.

The boys now return inside the hut and smear the butter on their bodies to make them nice and shining, and one of their

¹ This advice being seldom followed !

² Both paternal and maternal.

³ The amulet in this case is, usually, a necklace or a bracelet belonging to one of their younger brothers.

paternal uncles presents them with a new skin or a piece of cloth.

Meanwhile, about a mile from the ormarich, the warriors hold a *tiendo*, dance and songs. The ceremony is now finished, but the Poyot, the motirenik, and elders will remain in the hut all night, drinking the beer prepared for them by the old man who fed the boys.

6 and 7. *Tilet ap Kirokwet, Cutting of the Stick, followed by Shaving of the Head*

On the next morning a fire is lighted round the mabwai, and the boys go round it four times carrying their sticks, while the Poyot ap Tumda spits the beer over them and blesses them, praying that they may have many wives and much cattle. He then asks for the sticks which were given to them by their mothers at the yatet ap oret. The boys refuse to hand them over, until their father promises them a calf, called *moita ap Kirrokta*. The Poyot will then take the stick, trim its branches off and cut it shorter, so that he transforms it into a walking-stick. The branches are burned in the fire. The pamongo who fed them and his wife will now anoint them with butter.

On the fourth morning after their coming out *njenda*¹ will be put in the *kamoying*² and a part of it spread on a stool and mixed with milk and fat. The hair of the initiates will now be shaved for the first time since the first ceremony of rotyinotet and their head will be plastered with this mixture.

This day marks the end of their ceremonial uncleanness and confinement. It is from this day only that they are allowed to marry or to have sexual relations with the girls in the singroina. They now discard all the initiation clothes and ornaments and assume the normal accoutrement of Kipsigis manhood.

¹ Salt from the salt lick.

² Hollowed-out tree from which the goats drink.

INITIATION OF GIRLS

The initiation ceremonies for girls closely resemble those of boys. I was admitted to the first part of *rotyinotet* and to the complete *yatet ap oret*; but I do not know what replaces the *Arap Mogoss* trial of the boys. Clitoridectomy takes, of course, the place of circumcision, and I have been told that this operation among the *Kipsigis* is more delicately performed than among other tribes, which, in trying to remove the clitoris, cut deeply into the flesh.

Some differences in ceremonial which have come to my notice are perhaps worth remarking.

The girls, when dancing during *rotyinotet*, wear the *colobus* monkey fur anklets and ornaments of the warriors. Their songs (two of which will be found in the Appendix) are in praise of their sweethearts, but, if they have ever been violated by a man, they can introduce this theme into the song and ask the other girls to abstain from having any dealings with him.

When the girls are due to retire, the old women form a circle round the hut and, addressing the men, sing the following song :

Omelel, ee (ch. ee)

Omelelwech kimosuren langatúni,

Let us refuse him who has no erection this night.

the meaning¹ being that the men will now have to abstain from intercourse with their sweethearts, who will be kept secluded in the hut.

After the word "*langatúni*" all the men must depart, no male being admitted to the ceremony with the exception of the *chebotipik*. He is a man who has lost his brothers and sisters and he can assist in women's ceremonies, being always referred to as a woman.

The girls do not build a *menjit*, but live in the hut of the old woman who feeds them. This hut and the adjoining fence are called *kaptiriong*. Inside this fence the girls build

¹ As explained to me.

small toy huts, called *kot ap chemerenik*, the huts of the girl initiates. Here they put the small round fruit of the *labotuēt*, the *tug' ap labot*, pretending that they are tending their husband's cattle.

The *yatet ap oret* is in all points similar to that of the boys, but in the *tilet ap kirokwet* a goat, and not a calf as in the case of the boys, is given to them.

The girls on coming out of initiation are called *chebkeleyot*¹ and are usually married at once. In the meanwhile they may sleep in the hut of any old widow.

THE EFFECTS OF INITIATION

The meaning of all the great *Tumda* ceremonies, as here described, is quite clear in parts. It is composed of an initiation into secret rituals, invocations of fertility, teaching of tribal law and custom, casting off of uninitiated uncleanness, coming forth from seclusion and discarding the old clothes—the final stage of the *chrysalis*, before full tribal membership.

What is the purpose of initiation? To sharpen the endurance of the initiate, to make good warriors out of men, and to teach women to love and care for their husband's cattle. To teach men that they are part of a complicated organization, family, clan, *puriēt*, and age-set, to each of which they must show obedience.

Do the initiation ceremonies really fulfil their purpose?

The first thing even a casual observer notices is that the boys take at least six months to recover from the effects of the harsh treatment during their seclusion and their frights. One finds it difficult to believe that the cheerful and clever lads one has seen before *rotyinotet* are the same specimens as those of *yatet ap oret*. They seem now to have lost their mental equilibrium. They wander about aimlessly all day and, when in the company of others, do not seem able to follow the plainest conversation or to answer the most simple

¹ Plural *chebkeleik*.



PLATE IX.

THE INITIATE BEING ANOINTED WITH BUTTER. THE KIPKANDOLIT HAS ALREADY BEEN STUCK ON HIS FOREHEAD

He is holding the kirokwet stick on which his mother has hung an amulet (kerichot)—the necklace of his younger brother. The nariat headdress is covering his forehead. Across the photograph spears waved at the camera



THE GIRLS' DANCE AFTER YATET AP ORET

The movements and rhythm are of a pronounced sexual character. Only uninitiated girls take part while the elder women are looking on and spirits are very high

of questions. A thick veil, through which they cannot see, seems to have fallen over their minds, and their intelligence and self-reliance after those ordeals are simply non-existent until they revert to normal again.

The teaching the boys receive after their coming out is certainly vaster than that of their menjit, but what makes initiation of such importance is circumcision and the secret rituals they have learned together. This makes them feel that they share an experience and a knowledge of things that strangers have not got, and it helps to build up a sense of *unity* and of *Tribal Cohesion*. This, to my mind, is the main effect of circumcision, and it is towards this end that teaching about clan, ipinda and puriet are directed.

The strong beliefs the Kipsigis hold about circumcision and initiation can be demonstrated by two examples taken from life.

Some time ago, during the Kosigo subdivision of the Nyonge age-set, a misinformed mission declared that it would forbid in future marriages between its proselytes and circumcised Kipsigis women ; so the girls were married before going to initiation. After some years these women noticed that all their babies died very soon after birth and immediately connected this calamity with the Kipsigis belief that an uncircumcised person is either barren, or gives birth to short-lived children. The women left their husbands in a body, and a special initiation was held for them in the Reserve. This mission had a similar experience at Peelkut, and from these disasters no mission in Kipsigisland is likely to recover in our times, as the elders accuse them of trying to make their women barren and the men sterile.

But circumcision without initiation is not sufficient to make one a full member of the tribe, although it permits of marriage with a Kipsigisindet. A young man called Arap Chuma, who helped me for a long time as an interpreter and teacher of Kipsigis, had been sent to Nairobi when he was very young and found it convenient to be circumcised

by a European doctor. When he returned, he was allowed to marry and settle in the Reserve ; but he is constantly made to feel that, unless he is initiated, he will not be considered as really one of them. The nagging and vexations, and especially the bragging of the initiated men, have gone so far that I left him firmly convinced that this was an all-important step to his happiness that he must take at the first opportunity. He has been asked to pay, apart from the usual goat and the snuff,¹ *three shillings and one cow* as a fine. The cow is taken by the Poyot ap Tumda who blesses him ; but the Poyot must, when the cow bears calves, distribute them among the *Kiruogindet Neo* ² and the *Poysiek* ³ of the man's "group of kokotinwek", so that all the authorities, civil and religious, of his district shall share the proceeds of the fine imposed on the uninitiated man.

¹ The snuff is given to the motirenik.

² *Vide* authority.

³ *Vide* authority.

CHAPTER III

THE IPINDA AGE-SETS

The Ipinda, or age-set, is one of the categories into which the Kipsigis are grouped from the moment they have come out of initiation. It is impossible to understand the role played by this division into age-sets without knowing of its organization in the past and of its development in recent years.

I. HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

Before the coming of British rule, there was one institution of vital importance to all the tribes of the Kipsigis group ; that was the army. To be admitted to its privileges and responsibilities one had to undergo a long and severe training, and the initiation rituals served this purpose. The purpose served by the Ipinda, or age-set, was to regulate at what exact moment a young man should be allowed to bear arms and at what time he had to retire. During his term of office as a warrior, he could bear arms, hunt, go to dances and festivals, sleep with a sweetheart, and marry. Before initiation he could not enjoy these privileges and, after he had been forced to retire from the war-group because of the next age-set coming out, he did not participate in these privileges to the same degree as before. Round this short period of from one to fifteen or twenty years¹ centred all the expectations of the rising generation and the, sometimes sour, reminiscences of the retired Ipinda. Once a new Ipinda was allowed to go to initiation, the present warrior ipinda had to retire, and it is easily to be understood that it exerted its influence and strength to the very last moment to prevent the youngsters from becoming warriors.

¹ According to the period of their lives during which the Ipinda was cut.

There are in the Kipsigis cycle, seven ipinwek ; the Maĩna, Chuma, Sawe, Kipkoymet, Kablelach, Kimnyige, Nyonge, each lasting from fifteen to twenty years.

I am afraid that I have not gone deeply enough into the question of the duration of the ipinwek, while in the field. The only positive factor is that the son of a man *must* necessarily belong to the ipinda following that of his father but one, or the one after, and that he cannot possibly belong to the ipinda which follows that of his father. Thus :

Kablelach.
Kimnyige.
Nyonge.
Maĩna.
Chuma.

The son of a Kimnyige can be a Maĩna or more seldom, a Chuma, but he cannot be a Nyonge. A fifteen-year duration of the ipinda and a 105 year cycle sounds perfectly logical. Thus when Chuma begins, a boy of 15 may have a Nyonge father of 45 if his father also had been initiated at the same age.¹ This holds good also for the time when the Kipsigis were going to initiation at the age of 20 to 25, e.g. :—

Kablelach : first kabl. circumcised aged 25, has a child at least 4 years later.

Kimnyige : son aged 11.

Nyonge : son aged 26 is going to circumcision.

And this is taking extreme cases of people going to initiation at the beginning of each ipinda and thus, in the days of saget-ap-eito, much older than the young men who followed them.

On the other hand, I reckon that the Nyonge generation should have begun somewhere after 1901, as its first subdivision, the Kiptilgarit, take the name from the railway. The first train arrived in Kisumu on the 26th of December, 1901. I know two Kosigo (the subdivision of Nyonge which

¹ Thirty years (15 + 15) from the beginning of Nyonge to the beginning of Chuma.

followed Kiptilgarit) who have married sons and infant grandchildren. I hope that some other worker will be able to elucidate these points. Personally I think that since the *saget-ap-eito* has been abolished, and that the distinction between warriors and old men is now a matter of age, this problem has only an historical importance. As this is a plain account of my field-work I do not want to introduce into it critical arguments and controversial subjects and to discuss Mr. Hollis's, Orchardson's, and Huntingford's facts proving that the *ipinda* lasted anything from $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 21 years, but I think that Mr. Huntingford is nearer the truth when he states that the *ipinda* lasted about 15 years. I hope to be able to discuss this question later in a separate paper.

The rule was that the warrior age-set stayed in office until the sons of the previous *ipinda* but one had gone to initiation. Thus when the *Kipkoymet* are warriors, the *Kablelach* cannot go to initiation (and become warriors in their turn) until all the sons of the *Chuma* have been initiated and become *Kipkoymet*.¹

But to have waited until the very last son of the *Chuma* had been initiated would have been impossible. Availing themselves of the loophole in what must otherwise be the rule, the sons of the *Sawe* ² would try to persuade the *Kipkoymet* to allow them to go to initiation. But the *Kipkoymet* would refuse permission as long as possible, as, once this permission was granted, their generation was "cut" and they had to retire as elders.

I have met some old *Kablelach* who related to me the hardship their age-set had to undergo before persuading the *Kipkoymet* to retire. An essential part of this ceremony was the carrying of pots of beer by the would-be warriors to a

¹ One had to jump one generation every time to find who were the fathers of the present one. Thus the *Kablelach* will have as father the *Sawe*, the *Kimnyige*, the *Kipkoymet*, and so on.

² I.e. the future *Kablelach*. Thus, even in older days, during the first subdivision of an *Ipinda*, children who had for fathers men of two different *Ipinwek* could have been circumcised together.

very old man. The Kipkoymet for years stood guard day and night over all the paths to stop the future Kablelach from performing this ritual. Whenever the Kipkoymet met the sons of the Sawe, they would beat them up, so as to give them a foretaste of what would happen to them if they were ever seen carrying the Ipinda beer to the elder. This succeeded in rousing so thoroughly the future Kablelach as to make them retire to the forest. When they were sufficiently strong, they made a sortie and attacked the Kipkoymet; but the elders acted as mediators and the Kipkoymet retired. This is known to this day as "the war of the Ipinwek".

The Saget ap eito¹ ceremony

To mark the end of the present Ipinda and to make the beginning of the next one more conspicuous, the ceremony of "killing the bull" was performed. This is one of the two² most important ceremonies in Kipsigis life, and I must be excused if I describe it at some length.

In the following typical example, I shall again take the Kipkoymet as being the acting warrior age-set. The Kipkoymet are the sons of Chuma. When they are approaching the fifteen (or twenty) years' limit since the installation of the Kipkoymet, the Kablelach³ will be getting restless. Most of them are by now between 20 and 30 years of age and have not yet been initiated. That means that up to now they have led a very repressed life, not being allowed to make use of any of the prerogatives of manhood. From hunting and war they will be excluded as not being "capable" of carrying arms; married women will refuse them their favours, as they are uncircumcised and thus "unclean",⁴ and even the girls will refuse to lie with them in the "men's club",⁵ as the circumcised men will beat them if they do so. In one of the *kokotinwek*⁶ about two

¹ Killing (strangling) the bull.

² The other being initiation.

³ I am using the term Kablelach for greater clearness. They will not be Kablelach before initiation.

⁴ Simda.

⁵ Singroina.

⁶ Villages.

months before harvest the Kablelach will gather and decide that they must take the first step towards their initiation. After sending secret word round the country to the boys of their age-set, a few of them will meet one night at the hut of a man of the Sawe ipinda who has an uncircumcised child. He will provide them with beer, and the boys, doing their best to hide in the bush, will carry it to any old sage noted for his wisdom. As often as not, they will choose one of the retired *kiptayat neo nebo murenek*¹ and, putting down the beer in front of him, will explain the purpose of their visit. The old man will invite the leaders of the warrior age-set to a beer-party the next morning. He will send his invitation secretly, so that they may not know for what purpose they are being called. At this point a great deal depends on the diplomacy of the old man. As the Kipkoymet sit drinking their beer, he will tell them of the heroic deeds of their Ipinda and of how they must be tired of going to war. He explains to them what a pleasant life the elders have, attending beer parties all day, and of the admiration which an old orator commands ; also of the great losses in men the Kipsigisiek have sustained during the present generation, and of how wise it would be if they stopped at home and thought more about giving birth to more children and handed over the responsibility for the protection of the tribe to the next generation. It is usually a long speech, but it always centres round the points given above—an appeal first to their egoism and vanity, and secondly to their love of their people. If the Kipkoymet do not follow his advice, everything will have to be started all over again ; but if they do, they will consult with the members of their Ipinda. When a favourable answer is given to the old man, the Sawe, who are the fathers of the Kablelach, will immediately begin celebrating the Great News. Now they will be the fathers of warriors, their sons will bring them cattle from their raids, they will marry and give them grandchildren ; it is great

¹ Great chief of the warriors.

news indeed. Every Sawe household with a son will slaughter at least one he-goat, and the boy's friends will come and celebrate. For many days to come everybody will drink and make merry, and then about harvest time ¹ the boys will start building their *menjit*, initiation hut. Here they will come to live and be instructed in their duties for about nine months, or even a year, and on the day of their coming out ² the Saget ap eito ceremony will be performed.

Sot and Waldai had their own ceremony of "cutting" the generation: but Peelkut united with Puret, as the tradition runs that, when the Kipsigisiek occupied their present territory, they first settled in Puret, and from that day the Peelkut people have sacrificed the bull at the same spot by the Mossaiga where the first sacrifice was made.

When the Kablelach are about to come out, the Kipkoymet warriors will erect a hut next to the hut of the elder who first offered them the beer, when he was trying to persuade them to retire. In this hut, called *igor*, they will hang the meat ready for the festivities. A spotless white bull must then be sought. He is quite a rarity. When found, he is brought to the hut of the old man. The warriors then build what is really a door imitating the entrance to the kraal, called *ormarich*, an essential part of all initiation ceremonies.

The Kablelach have now come out of initiation and on this first night of freedom sleep by the river, fully armed. This may be symbolic of their new rank of warriors, as, when raiding an enemy village, the regiment has to stay the night in the bush and follow the course of the river. When morning breaks, the Kipkoymet warriors take off their head-dress of ostrich feathers,³ which is symbolic of their rank of warriors, and send them to the Kablelach. The arrival of these *sombet* is greeted with a high pitched, shrill shout,

¹ This is necessary, as there must be plenty of grain to feed the boys during initiation. I do not think that harvest is connected in this case with fertility.

² Life in this hut and initiation customs are described under "Initiation".

³ Sombet.

called *wagat*, to call the Kablelach to the ranks. The war-horns are now blown and the " army files ", *kwanaiik*, are formed. There are, in the Kipsigis army, four " regiments ", into which one is born.¹ Each file comprised representatives of only one regiment, and thus, from the very first day, the " regiment " was formed.

As the Kablelach are advancing towards the gathering-place of the Kipkoymet the bull is being sacrificed. The white bull is made to lie on its left side and its feet are bound together. Then the four *poysiek ap puriosiek*,² who belong to the same age-set and are the four great judges of cattle-cases, proceed to strangle the bull in front of the *mabwai*.³ Those four *poysiek ap puriosiek* were, before their age-set was cut, the leaders of their Ipinda and of the four *puriosiek*. They are assisted by four *chemengesh*, i.e. helpers, and by a ninth old man, who examines the entrails for auspices. This examination is of such great moment in the *saget ap eito* that the old man is said to be contaminated by the spiritual examination and to die a short time after having touched the entrails. For this reason the eldest possible man was chosen, and it was an honour sought by many.

If the entrails have not been auspicious, the *saget ap eito* must be repeated again ; but if they are, the four regiments advance to the sacrificial place and parade triumphantly before the critical eyes of the retiring Ipinda. On their arrival the wives and mothers of the Kipkoymet set up a ceremonial wail and, while tearing their hair and clothes, they sing the praises of their husbands and deplore the fact that men as brave as they have to retire to the rank of elders. " Look at them," they cry, " look at those cruel warriors who have to be ' cut ' ; we shall never hear them again coming back from battle and bringing many cows to our huts. The brave warriors are gone and we shall never again

¹ v. " *Puriet* ".

² v. " *Puriet* ". *Poysiek ap puriosiek* means " the elders of the *Puriet* ".

³ For description of the *mabwai* v. p. 159.

see such warlike regiments and what a loss this is to us. From to-day we cease being the wives of warriors and become the wives of old men."

The Kablelach, led by their four Kiptaynek, step over the bull and pour milk on its head, while the elders sing the Kayandaet song of thanks to Asis :

Ohee !

ch. Oheeee !

Ohee !

ch. Oheeee !

<i>Kongoi</i>	<i>kagonget</i>	<i>ipinda.</i>
Thank you	it has been cut	the generation.
<i>ngunon</i>	<i>amun</i>	<i>kagorur</i>
this very moment	as it was good	the stomach
		<i>moet</i>
		<i>ab eito.</i>
		of the bull.

A large piece of skin from the bull's hide is now given to each leader of the Kablelach to wear round his arm, and smaller pieces for each warrior's finger. First the four leaders and then all the Kablelach warriors will go four times round the mabwai and then through the ormarich, while the elders shower blessings upon them, the most important of which is to be brave in battle and to have a great number of children.

While the saget ap eito is being performed, all the men who have not attended this ceremony, as well as the girls and children, have to stay in their huts while it is going on. The saget ap eito is followed by a great feast, of which all initiated men partake.

The meaning of this ceremony is very clear. The Kipkoymet have to retire under the pressure of their elders, and the Kablelach are taking their place. The Kipsigisiek have now a new and more youthful army and the day is marked with great rejoicings. On the other hand everything connected with this ceremony is charged with such supernatural power that it is believed that uninitiated boys and girls run great risks ¹ if they appear outside the shelter

¹ The actual cause of the risk is difficult to discover. All I could get out of the elders was, "It is a dangerous day ; it is better if they remain hidden, as, if they come out, they may die."

afforded them by their huts, and that to touch the entrails of the white bull spells imminent death.

The last generation to have gone through the *saget ap eito* were the Kablelach. This ceremony has not been performed since, as the Government officials were afraid that the presence of a great number of armed warriors might prove dangerous to the interests of the European community.

The Nandi laibon Parsirian Arap Samoi, who belonged to the Nyonge ipinda, tried to revive the custom, but it all ended very unfortunately for him. An accusation was brought against him that he was trying to disturb the peace, and Arap Samoi was imprisoned.

My information on the cutting of the Ipinda was collected from old men who had already gone through it. It was quite a unique chance, as there are very few of them alive now, and the rising generation knows very little about this ceremony. The old men called a meeting, which was attended by a hundred Kipsigisiek of different ages, and between them they gave me a very good imitation of this ceremony. The information has since been checked in Peelkut and Puret, and I think that my present description must be very near the truth, as I have been careful to give only details that have always recurred in the tales of my different informants.

With the passing of the *Saget ap Eito*, very serious changes were introduced into the system of the *ipinwek*.

2. Changes Introduced by the Abolition of the Saget ap Eito

In the times of the *Saget ap Eito*, the ipinda was a well-balanced institution. The different age-sets had well marked frontiers, and the duties and privileges of each age-set were clearly defined.

Nowadays the Kipsigisiek do not feel the need of their military institutions, and the Ipinda, following the general trend of events, has shed its military attributes and remained as the regulator of social behaviour.

There were, in the old system, some striking inequalities

in the treatment of different members of the warrior age-set. The young men who became warriors on the day of *saget ap eito* had before them about fifteen to twenty years in which to enjoy life. But as time was passing and more boys came out of initiation, they had to enjoy a much shorter period of activity. The last set to come out of initiation remained in office for a bare year or two. Not only is it difficult to understand that the people submitted to this harsh rule without any revolt that would have left its mark on the organization of the tribe, but it is next to unbelievable that the army should have been bereaved of warriors in the prime of their youth. An explanation which is often tendered is that the retired warriors could join in a raid. Their work was not to take part in the fighting, but to steal the cattle, while their comrades were attacking the enemy.

No great difference is made now between the members of the different *ipinwek*, age being taken into much greater consideration than of old, also nowadays the children of many different age-sets can be initiated during the same *Tumdo*.¹ Thus the youngsters nowadays do not have the same potent reasons for instigating a *saget ap eito*, and the time for changing the *Ipinda* is left to the unbiased reckoning of the old men. But the most important effect of this change is the age at which the *Kipsigis* now go to initiation. When the *saget ap eito* was still taking place, most of them had to wait until they were adult men of about twenty-five. Now there is no reason why they should go so late, and most boys at the age of 16 have already been initiated. As the girls imitate in their ceremonies everything the boys do, with every passing year they also go earlier to initiation.² I have seen girls of 12 going through the ceremony and getting married when it was over; that is at the age of 13. The boys, as

¹ *Vide* also p. 31.

² I think that if the Elders were left to themselves, although they would have sent the girls to the *Tumdo* earlier than in former years, they would not have committed the abuse of circumcising them as early as the age of 12 or 13. *Vide* p. 5.

soon as they have come out of initiation, assume an independent attitude towards their family, and many leave their home to go and work on European farms against their family's wish. They have grown impatient of every form of authority, and initiation ceremonies take place every year, with the result that there are fewer boys in each and that there is a feebler bond of solidarity between them. The result is such that it goes a long way towards proving, once more, that, whenever an old-established institution is done away with by force, without taking into consideration the many threads by which it is connected with the tribal system, it leaves behind it nothing but chaos during the long years of re-adaptation.

The old men were so disheartened by the behaviour of the Maina generation that they decided to curtail its formal duration and started the present Chuma.

3. *Present-day Function of the Ipinda—The Ipinda as Regulator of Social Behaviour*

Between two boys who have been to initiation together, there exists a very strong bond, independent of their mutual affection. They call each other by a special term, *pagule*, and there is between them an artificial bond of kinship, as they are not allowed to marry or sleep with each other's daughters, as this will be considered an incestuous union.¹ This relationship, although the term of *pagule* is not used, is extended to all men belonging to the same Ipinda, even though there may have elapsed between their respective initiations as many as fifteen to twenty years. The prohibition to marry covers only the children of an Ipinda and is not extended to any other person in the family.

This link between members of the same age-set is not one artificially forged by tribal custom. When the Kipsigis were still a warrior tribe, the warrior age-set, after

¹ But the son of, e.g., a Nyonge may have intercourse with the wife of another Nyonge, this being merely regarded as a case of adultery.

coming out of initiation, built their *singroina*¹ huts in all the villages, and the warriors slept there together with their sweethearts. That is why both a man's army group (*puriet*) and his *ipinda* are referred to as "my fire" (*mat*).

They were thus all ready to protect the cattle against an enemy attack. This custom is still continued nowadays. The *singroina* is not so large as it used to be, and even two youngsters can have one of their own. The *Kipsigis* are becoming individualistic. This *singroina* is only used by the members of one *ipinda*. The friends of the owners come to visit them, and every passing traveller of that age-set can sleep there if he so desires. A man of the preceding or following *ipinda* cannot come there, as, if he belongs to an older *ipinda*, respect is due to him; and, if he is of the following, he must respect his elders.² Even if there is no *singroina* in the vicinity, a traveller can only sleep in the hut of a man of his own *ipinda*.

The men of the immediately older *ipinda* are respectfully called *kwanda* (father) or *pyot* (elder), and their wives *iyoo* (mother). The child of a member of their own *ipinda* is referred to as *lakwet ap ipinda* (son, child of *ipinda*). There are no definite obligations between different *ipinwek*, other than that the men of senior *ipinwek* are respected like elders. At the sight of a man of a senior *ipinda* they stop making love to their sweethearts, and their conversation, which is mostly *rabalaisian*, changes its subject that is, unless they are encouraged to continue by the *pyot*, who, more often than not, joins wholeheartedly in the conversation. Except for this respect shown in their manners and forms of address, no subserviency is shown by the minor *ipinda*, unless the "senior" is really old. This respect towards senior *ipinwek* is also shown, during initiation, to their sons. During circumcision the boy

¹ Men's, warrior's hut.

² The only exception being that the father can, for exceptional reasons (*vide* p. 50), sleep in the *singroina* of his sons.

whose father belongs to the eldest age-set of all the fathers of those present is circumcised first. He is also honoured by being given in the *menjit*¹ the leadership over his fellow initiates, and is called *Kiboretiet*. On coming out of initiation he has no status of particular honour, but his rank during initiation may help him to be chosen Kiptayat of the warriors of his village.

Between members of the same ipinda the links are much stronger. When the youngster marries, he asks all his friends of his age-set to a beer-drinking, at which his bride is presented to them.² This beer-drinking and presentation must be gone through with every subsequent wife he takes. From the day of his first marriage, which marks his economic independence, he very often gives beer-parties to which he asks his friends; but he will not kill a goat to feed them unless there are many, usually over six or seven, members of his ipinda present. To honour one's ipinda is one of the rules learned during initiation.

During all the years before and after marriage a man dances and hunts with members of his age-set, and he sleeps with them at the different singroinek; as marriage does not put an end to his right to make love and sleep with *unmarried* women. Thus initiation, the singroina, the hunting, dancing and common love affairs³ of the ipinda, serve to forge a strong link between them. There is a Kipsigis saying that, if you want to make an army strong, the best way to do it is to place next to each other during the fighting either the rivals for the favours of a girl, or the men who share a singroina, "as the lover dares not disgrace himself in the eyes of his rival, and the members of a singroina will rather die than not stand and protect each other to the last."

What has thus begun as a comradeship of warriors sharing common dangers and common duties has now developed

¹ Initiation hut.

² V. 'Marriage'.

³ Not in the sense of sharing the same girl, but participating in the quest and cohabiting with the couple.

into a sort of old boys' community. The bonds are, perhaps, a little weaker, but the necessities of the daily life of Kipsigis youth have prevented it from becoming a dried relic of the past.

There are no economic obligations between the members of an ipinda. Those obligations are shared by the members of the three other groups, the family, the clan, and the village.

The Age-Sets of Women

The women also have their own age-sets, but they are of no importance, as very shortly after their coming out of initiation¹ they marry and are merged in their husband's ipinda. An old man may thus have wives of many different ages and age-sets, but even the youngest one must share in the honour attached to her husband's ipinda. It is no unusual thing for a man of thirty to call a girl of twenty "mother" and to pay to her the same outward respect that he would show to her old husband. On the other hand he can very well commit adultery with this "mother" without this being considered as a case of incest.²

TABLE OF IPINWEK

<i>Ipinda Cycle.</i>	<i>Katchaet, or subdivision nicknames.</i>	<i>Duration of the complete Ipinda.</i>
Sawe		
Kipkoymet [Kerongoro] ³	{ Kiptormesendet Kibelkot Kimarere	
Kablelach	{ Kipalayeng Kimutawet Masiba	
Kimnyige	{ Kipebucha Kipsiljjoget Tabarit Kiptilosiek Keptechoret	

¹ Which is the moment at which they acquire their ipinda.

² "Sogoranet" something unnatural, q.v.

³ Some of my informants were of the opinion that the first set of the Kipkoymet were traditionally called Kerongoro—until some unlucky event befell these last and the name was dropped out. In the meanwhile the association of the name of Kerongoro with that of Kipkoymet became

THE IPINDA AGE-SETS

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<i>Ipinda Cycle.</i>	<i>Katchaet, or subdivision nicknames.</i>	<i>Duration of the complete Ipinda.</i>
Nyonge	Kiptilargit Kosigo Kipterangerek Martartebit Kipsirgot Kipsombosiek Boulou	1901(?)–1921
Maina	Mesiewa Kassie Shilling Silobai Kipkulmengit Kiptindinie	1921–1930
Chuma	Kimingiet	1930

The nicknames of each subdivision are related to an important or remarkable event which has taken place during their initiation year; thus "shilling", because the East African shilling was introduced in the stead of the Indian rupee; "Kiptilgarit" from til = cut and swahili "garit" = railway. This is explained in two different ways. Some Kimnyige say that this name was given to indicate that the Kipsigis were cut off from the Nandi by the Kenya and Uganda Railway; but the more commonly accepted version is that during that year the boys had to wait a long time before going to initiation, as the harvest was late, and they crossed the railway-line and went over the border to be initiated by the Nandi. That many Kipsigis boys were initiated in Nandi is an ascertainable fact. I have seen many Nandi boys being circumcised with Kipsigis, and this is another proof of a real bond of kinship between the two tribes.

It will be noticed that the Maina ipinda did not last more than nine years. This is due to an action taken by the elders, with the purpose of curtailing this ipinda, as they accused the youngsters who belonged to it of not living

so close that all Kipkoymet came to be known as Kerongoro. This name is also mentioned as that of major ipinwek of the Suk and the Keyo by Beech and Massam respectively.

according to the moral standards of their fathers. Three main indictments were brought against the Maina :

(1) They had no proper respect for their kot-ap-chi¹ and did not use correctly the complicated kinship terminology, with the result that, if it was not for the vigilance of the elders, most Maina would have disgraced themselves by committing incest.

(2) They did not confine themselves to stealing cattle from *punih*,² but also stole from their fellow Kipsigis.

(3) They showed ignorance of and disrespect towards the customs of their fathers.

There is also a tradition that the Maina ipinda of over a century ago had also been stigmatized for different misdeeds. For all these reasons the elders decided that it would be a mistake to continue the Maina ipinda. No meeting of all the poyziek was called, but word was sent round the country by *alamalyet* messengers, and, when the next batch of boys came out of initiation, the elders declared that they belonged to the Chuma ipinda. In years past the white bull of the saget ap eito would have been sacrificed and the cutting of the ipinda would have been a very severe form of punishment for the Maina, whereas now it has not made the slightest difference in their standing. They are so young that even the Chuma but rarely give them the title of poyot.

Before the Kimnyige age-set, according to the statement of some influential Elders, each Ipinda had but three sub-sets. The young men, thus, could not go to initiation every year. What the interval between the sub-sets was most of them could not or would not say. Some put forward the suggestion of a 7-year interval—but they were very uncertain and often contradicted themselves.

Nowadays, in spite of the yearly Tumdo ceremonies, the

¹ People of the house, i.e. the family term applied to persons belonging to the same subdivision of a clan.

² Strangers, enemies. This term covers all tribes outside the Nilo-Hamitic group of Kenya and of course includes Europeans.

same subdivision nickname (katchaet) appears to be given to the initiates of two or more consecutive initiations. I have also noticed that, exceptionally, there are discrepancies between the nicknames of young men initiated during the same year at spatially distant kokwotinwek (villages). Physiological age is, nowadays, the deciding factor in most of the social relations among Kipsigis, and the Ipinda, together with most of the old social divisions (puriet, oret), tends to be left out of the practical and everyday life and to be emphasized only on ceremonial occasions.

CHAPTER IV

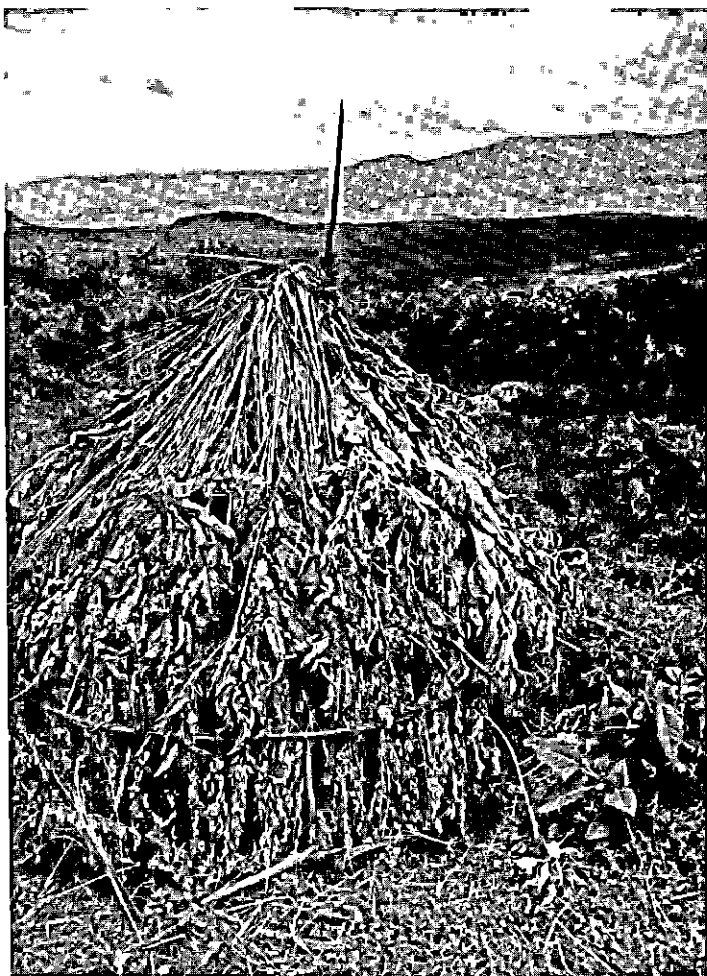
PREMARITAL LIFE OF BOYS AND GIRLS

The life of the young Kipsigis is, as in most pastoral tribes, an enjoyable introduction to the cares and responsibilities of the full-grown individual. There is already, here, a sharp division of labour. The task of the young men is to herd the cattle and goats of their father and to lend a hand during harvest. The girls will help their mothers in sweeping the hut, fetching water, and carrying wood for making a new hut or to keep the fire going—all heavy duties that boys, imitating their seniors, consider beneath their dignity to perform.¹ When they are a little older, the boys will be given a spear and will take the cattle to the salt-licks, tramping, very often, for days and sleeping in the huts of their age-set. They will go hunting with their father and will accompany him on his journeys, sitting at night round the fire and breathlessly following the tales about the brave deeds of their glorious ancestors. The elders will *teach him the customs of his tribe and the history of his family*. He will hear about the brave progenitors of his clan and of the number of enemies killed by the leaders of his puriet.² When night comes, he will sleep with his sweetheart, and of that union a baby may be born ; the mother will be disgraced and may hang herself, and the baby must always be destroyed.

It is easy to speak of the nobility of woman's role in primitive life, as it is usually judged by theoretical ideals that do not play the same part in their civilization as in ours. In Kipsigiland the man is the sole maker of standards of nobility, and he only considers aristocratic what *he*

¹ For the contribution of boys and girls to Kipsigis economics *vide* "Economics".

² Regiment.



CHILDREN'S GAMES. A HUT

deigns to do. Moreover, he regards women as his inferiors. Man is the lawgiver, and women accept him at his own valuation. That does not mean that Kipsigis women lead a life of drudgery and misery, but that they are considered as standing on a grade below that of their menfolk in human dignity.

This sharp demarcation makes itself felt from the very beginning of the lives of the young Kipsigis and has a strong influence on their character. The boy belongs to, and is proud to be a member of, a clan and an army group. His ancestors before him have stood in the place that he now occupies, and his children will follow after him. He is proud of the groups to which he belongs and he feels that his individuality is merged in them. This makes him haughty. His training in tribal custom and his travels give him larger horizons and an intelligence and a sense of humour that have delighted all Europeans who have come into contact with him.

Woman's outlook on life and the limits of her mental vision are much narrower. Her clan and her age-set will change with marriage. She has no tradition to carry on. She is not free to choose a husband and, when her husband dies, she is supposed to become automatically the wife of her husband's brother. Before marriage she has to look after her mother's children and after marriage her work begins with the rising sun and is never finished before sunset. She is not present at the meetings of the elders and she is excluded from all forms of public life.

These are a few of the reasons that make for the immense breach between the mentalities of Kipsigis men and women.

There have been similar periods in the evolution of our own civilization. The status of the Athenian wife of the Socratic age is a sufficient parallel.

But love will always stand as the leveller of all social injustices. Boys from the age of about 15¹ and girls from 12

¹ That is, after their coming out of initiation.

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to the day of their initiation¹ will be preoccupied with seeking a mate. In the daytime the boys roam about the rich pastures with the cattle and the girls come and join them. They sit round, the boys plaiting each other's hair with red *murrum* earth and the girls making ornaments with beads. Strong rivalries will exist between them for the favours of a beautiful maid. When they ask her which one she loves, she will usually answer, "the bravest"; and from this moment the boys consider it a point of honour to do their utmost to prove their valour to the *aychet*.² They usually decide that the one first to accomplish the great feat they have set their minds on will be the lover, and that the other will stop courting the girl. This pact is strictly adhered to. Their heroism must be proved either by killing an enemy or one of "the four fierce animals", elephant, rhino, lion, and leopard; or by cutting off and presenting to their *aychet* the ear of a live elephant. This feat requires extraordinary skill and bravery. The boys lie in ambush behind the elephant and wait until the moment when he has turned his head to windward. They will then slowly emerge from the undergrowth and approach him stealthily, one from each side. At the critical moment they give a shout, which puzzles the animal, and they cut his ear off with a sweep of their sword. If both boys have succeeded in their quest, they will exchange cow bells or heifers and call each other *patajn* or brother.

Another way of securing the favours of a girl is to steal cattle from a foreign tribe; and the boasts of the young warriors are responsible for most of the cattle thefts of which the Kipsigis are accused by the Administration. The Governor one day came to Kericho and delivered through the interpreter a great speech about the evils of cattle theft. That same night the boys made great boasts to their sweethearts, and they proved so effective that the Governor

¹ Usually 14-16.

² Sweetheart.

was told in the morning that not a single cow remained in the Government kraal !

To make themselves more attractive to the young men, the girls make round their breasts, navel, and loins, artificial sores, called *lelesta*. They are produced by pinching the skin with the nails and introducing into the open wound the juice of the Machegit plant. The subsequent swelling eventually subsides and leaves a permanent cicatrice (*vide* Plate XII). The men also have similar sores, but they are not indispensable. The marks all young boys must have are called *saremik*. They are produced by sticking on the skin a piece of wood, which is lighted at the top and eventually burns right through the skin.¹ The girls gather to watch how the boys stand the pain and laugh at those who show any sign of suffering. The *saremik* are considered a mark of bravery, no boy being regarded as having attained manhood without them he is not allowed to marry, "as the hyena will not be afraid of him and will eat him together with his wife."

THE SINGROINA

This premarital courtship culminates in the aychet sleeping every night ² with her friend in the singroina.

The singroina, or men's club, is a hut built by the boys with their father's help for the purpose of sleeping with their sweethearts. Nowadays they can accommodate three to six couples, but it is said that, when the Kipsigis were still on the warpath, each village did not have more than one singroina and that up to twenty warriors slept in it. Its original purpose was to have all the warriors grouped together near the cattle ready, in a case of emergency, to repulse the enemy raids. The singroina now is not even built near the kraal and bears a different name from the "kraal singroina", which is called *kaaptich*. Nowadays

¹ The *saremik* are made on the arms and thighs.

² Except during menstruation.

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large households have their own singroinek, and one often finds singroinek occupied by members of one family only. When the singroina is thus attached to the household, brothers and sisters sleep in the same singroina. The singroina by my tent was shared by the two 12 and 16-year-old daughters of A. Seuer, as well as by his 15-year-old and his married son. No intercourse is supposed to take place between them; but there is no taboo on each sleeping with his sweetheart in his brother's or sister's presence. A married man will also use the singroina of his age-set in certain circumstances. When his grown-up girl has her menses, she will come from the singroina and sleep in the house. The father will then seek refuge in the singroina of his age-set or in a friend's house. This he does, not because it is considered "unclean" for him to sleep in the hut of a menstruating woman,¹ but because he is forbidden to sleep in the same hut as his grown-up girl. A girl is said to be grown up, not when she first has her menses, but when her breasts are well developed, normally at the age of 14. When a man sleeps in a singroina which does not belong to members of his age-set,² no daughter of his own ipinda may be present. When the inmates of a singroina are married, they may still bring their sweethearts there. This, for the Kipsigis, is a very normal state of affairs. I remember asking the wife of a man, whom I had known for very long, if she never felt bitter against her husband, and she answered scornfully: "I try to pull his hair out when I learn of his affairs with a married woman, but unmarried girls are of no importance."

Each singroina has at its head a Kiptayat,³ whose function it is to maintain order within its limits. The boys keep it spotlessly clean and sweep it every morning. Their mothers bring them their food there, and after harvest their fathers

¹ He may sleep in the same hut with his menstruating wife, but no intercourse takes place between them at that period.

² It must, then, belong to his sons.

³ Chief.



UNINITIATED KIPSIGIS GIRLS

The one on the left is wearing the osiek apron made of beads and cowrie shells. It is worn when going to a Kambaget (dance)

give them a little grain, which they store in their own tabot.¹ They have their own firewood, and in all respects the singroina looks like an independent little household.

When a boy has succeeded in securing the favours of a girl, he very often builds with wood and cow dung, a little screen round his bed, so that they may secure privacy ; but this is not always the case.

PREMARITAL LOVE AND ITS TECHNIQUE

A girl who is still a virgin (*pergeyat*) at her initiation is specially honoured. She is allowed at the dance which precedes circumcision to hold in her hands the *saruriat* tail of the great elders. From my observations at this ceremony and the information supplied by the warriors, I reckon that a little over half of the girls are intact at this moment.²

In the *singroina* the young men and the girls sleep naked, the man lying on his left-hand side and the girl on her right, the girl's legs lying between the legs of the man. To make love is *sach* or *kwen*, *ikwene ngo* = between whose legs do you lie = who is your lover.

The boy places his penis at the orifice of the vulva, and the girl *tuo*, that is, " shakes " to him in a circular movement. This results in orgasm for the man and, perhaps, for the girl³ as she has not yet submitted to clitoridectomy.

Another form of intercourse is to lie in the previous position without movement on the part of either partner, the girl clasping part of the penis between her legs, no intromission taking place. This is not always followed by orgasm, but this form of *sach* is regarded as in greater conformity with tribal custom.

The boys also sometimes perform the movements of coitus ; but this is said to be more dangerous, as they may not

¹ Granary inside the hut.

² At the maximum age of 17 in Peelkut, Waldai, and Puret. I am informed that in Sotik they sometimes wait for their initiation until the age of 20. In the three above-named districts the usual age for circumcision is between 14 and 16.

³ My information on this point has been given by men only.

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be able to repress themselves and may force the hymen of the girl.

Titillatio of the clitoris and of the breasts are not unknown, but kisses play no role in Kipsigis love-making.

The position during *sach* is the same as that adopted by married couples, and it may have originated in the will of the partners to hide their activities from the surrounding persons, although the Kipsigis are not known to abstain altogether from open exhibitionism, when their *aychet* is particularly lewd.

It is easy to understand that, with all these forms of *sach*, the virginity of the girl depends on the will of her partner, or on an accident. When she has lost her hymen, her lover is free to practise coitus, but must take steps to prevent conception. This he usually does by placing on the right-hand side, as one goes in, of the singroina door, a small bunch of wild plants,¹ or by giving a decoction of them to his sweetheart to drink. The practice of magic does not mean that the Kipsigis do not know the generative effects of sperma, as coitus interruptus is also practised.

When the girl, in spite of these precautions, has conceived, her lot is a particularly unhappy one.

CONCEPTION BEFORE INITIATION, AS OPPOSED TO CONCEPTION BEFORE MARRIAGE

Conception before initiation is regarded as a crime, and the most vile names are used to indicate the state of the girl. She is called *chebsorbuchót* or *purót*, like pregnant animals.

Conception is not reckoned as a sin against the future husband. Once the girl has come out of initiation, she is free to have a child without anybody being offended. Her future husband will usually be glad of the proof of his fiancée's fertility and also of the young baby, which will become his.

¹ I have not been able to learn their name.

A baby is in reality more of an asset than a handicap to an unmarried, but circumcised girl.

Her virginity at the moment of initiation is also of *secondary importance, as its lack is only punished by not* allowing the girl to hold the saruriat tail. But why then is conception at this moment considered contemptible? It is because a girl is not supposed to have a child before clitoridectomy, as the birth of such a child is said to make her unclean and barren, the fear of the supernatural punishment being used, perhaps, to emphasize the social rule.¹

When an uncircumcised girl is found to be pregnant, she is rushed to initiation at once, and her lover is ordered to kill a male goat.² The "motiryot" initiator of the girl will rub her and herself with the contents of its stomach, so that all uncleanness may be washed away by the sacredness of the dung. At the day of parturition, the girl is taken outside into the bush, and far from all human habitation, so that she may not soil them by the proximity of her blood.

Immediately the child's head appears, the old woman who is assisting the girl crams its mouth and nose with mud, so that it may not utter a single cry. If it does, it is considered that all the precautions have been wasted and that the girl is disgraced. This is so, because the child is said to begin life with the first breath of air it draws into its lungs; as it is believed that the spirit of its ancestor also enters its body by the same way. It is this ancestor that the nurse is trying to prevent from entering the child's body; and that is why she tries to stifle the first cry, characteristic of the air penetrating the child's lungs. If this operation has succeeded, the child is said never to have lived, and no disgrace is attached to the girl. The body of the child is

¹ A vicious circle as usual.

² This is the only punishment inflicted on him. He is under no obligation to marry the girl. It is said that in ancient times he was sometimes stoned to death by the angry parents and friends of the girl, but nobody could remember an occasion when this had happened.

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then buried. The father of the girl now kills a male sheep and strews the intestines from the place where the birth took place up to the hut, so that she may not touch the grass with her feet, as she is particularly unclean at this moment and will make the grass wither. On her return to the hut, the father kills a male goat and the girl is smeared with the contents of its stomach. Now all uncleanness has left her and she can behave like a normal person.

The missions, which encourage uncircumcised girls to bring them their children, have unwittingly introduced into their neighbourhood a new kind of evil. Those girls are considered by their tribe as unclean and "unnatural" beings,¹ and no decent Kipsigis will marry them.² They usually end up by turning prostitutes and leaving the country altogether. When they are rich, they return here and introduce into the blood of the tribe the virus of syphilis, from which it has been comparatively free until recently, according to local medical observations.

FUNCTION OF THE SACH

Courtship and premarital sexual freedom do not constitute among the Kipsigis a step towards marriage and the choice of a bride. It is indeed exceptional that the aychet of the singroina becomes the bride of her lover, as the girl has been predestined to a husband by her family, and in this choice her will plays no part.

We have seen in "Initiation" and "Ipinda" that Kipsigis boys and girls did not go to initiation in former years before they were 25 or 30, and even at that age men did not usually marry. The man from the moment of initiation, and the girls up to this moment, frequented the singroina, so that until not very long ago it was really grown-up men and women who found an outlet for their sexual needs in the institution of the sach.

¹ Sogoranet.

² Unless it be somebody who has been influenced by the mission to this rare extent.

If the sach is not examined in the light of Kipsigis history, this institution would be difficult to understand, as now it does not seem to fill any specific need. As the boys and girls, year after year, went earlier and earlier to initiation, they found it natural to continue an institution from which they certainly derive great pleasure. The girls now marry at the age of about 16, so that in their case, at least, there would have been no frustration if the institution had not been carried on; but the boys, among whom pederasty already exists, would certainly derive no benefit from its abolition; *in vitium dūcit culpa fuga*.

Historical survivals cannot exist without a social background into which they can fit. But, even if their existence does not constitute a vital necessity, there is, for them, such a force of acquired tastes and habits as to render their continuation a matter of routine. Having survived their original function they find new reasons of existence in their new environment.

UNNATURAL OFFENCES

It has been said that, with few exceptions, primitive tribes do not sin in this respect. This is difficult to believe in the light of modern research into the behaviour of animals and apes.

Of the frequency of "anteros" it was impossible to judge. If repression is its sole cause, it should be insignificant; but I have been present at the trial of a man accused of this offence, and precedents were cited. There is also a Kipsigis saying about the inhabitants of Embuen:—

<i>Kitinye karoron olin bo</i>	<i>Embuen, ngebole</i>
They are good afar	the people of Embuen, ¹ they dig
<i>pai, ngebole pande.</i>	
cleusine grain,	they dig maize.

which would indicate that the vice is far from unknown. (*Ngebole pai* is the circumlocution used to describe sodomy.)

¹ Embuen is the name given to the land where the tebunguet, a shrub not eaten by cattle, grows. It means agricultural land.

CHAPTER V

MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, CHILDBIRTH, ADOPTION

The object of marriage in all social systems is the foundation of a stable and permanent relationship between members of the two sexes—a relationship directed towards economic co-operation and the raising of children. But if the aims are universal, the means used to attain them are so manifold as to have often distracted our attention from that unity of purpose. This is not to say that differences in custom and ceremonial are not to be studied, but that they must be examined with due regard to their context and not as independent facts linked together and forcibly correlated to prove a personal theory.

Each culture has its own individual needs, its own social institutions, and its own economic system. That these influence the form of marriage and that they are in their turn affected by marriage customs cannot be doubted.

(a) THE CHOICE OF A WIFE

On his coming out of initiation the adolescent boy will be completely dependent on his father. His wealth consists of the calf he was given at Tilet ap Kirokwet and, perhaps, another calf and a few goats given to him by his parents so that he might start a herd.

He will be 20 or 22 when he contemplates marriage for the first time and his wealth in cattle only a fraction of the eight cows and twenty-three goats he will have to give to his father-in-law as bride-wealth. At this moment economic dependence on his parents is so strong that they will play a leading role in the choice of a wife.

The young Kipsigis at this period of his life does not seek in marriage an outlet for his sexual passion ; since his

initiation he has led in the singroina a life free from repressions of that sort. What he wants is to increase his material wealth through the joint efforts of his household. He also wants to have children and through them to enhance his social prestige. His first wife (*kerotyet*), as such, is going to enjoy greater honours and have special power over his household. All his agricultural work is, at first, going to fall on her, and it is her sons who will wield authority in his absence. All these reasons make the first marriage an object of such importance to his entire family that his parents will take a leading role in the first match-making.

The father, although he has no uncertain authority over his family, is very seldom the one who will conduct the preliminaries. This is the role of his wife. During work in the field or one of those interminable visits, she will speak about her son, of his fine qualities, and of the healthy cows they keep in their kraal. If the mother of the girl is willing, she will discuss it with her husband, and at this moment the parents of the boy will make their first public and ceremonial proposal. While all these preliminaries are taking place, the girl has either not gone to, or is still in, the initiation hut; which means that she is between 11 and 17 years of age.¹ The first marriage ceremony will be performed immediately on her coming out. The girl is not supposed at this age to have a private opinion on her future. If she has, as we shall see, things will be made very difficult for her.

(b) AWENDI KOITA (I AM GOING "TO PROPOSE"²)

The first official step taken by the boy's parents is to pay a ceremonial call on the parents of the girl. The mother may go alone, but she will usually have her husband to

¹ Infant marriages do take place; but they will be discussed separately, as they are unusual and are motivated by special causes not met with in everyday life.

² No word will convey the exact meaning of 'koita'. 'Tug' ap koita = the marriage cattle, Kibendi koita = he is going to propose.

accompany her. Both are dressed in their best skins, and the husband carries a *kuriot* stick to show the purpose of their visit.

When they arrive at the girl's house, they sit by the sacred altar of the mabwai and wait until the future parents-in-law come out of the hut. They must not go in or call them, as that would be showing undue haste. The parents of the girl will be informed of their arrival by the children and will eventually come out and sit by their visitors.

An endless conversation now begins. For nearly an hour every possible subject is referred to except the real object of the visit, which is known, however, to both parties. At last the boy's mother in a few veiled sentences will speak about her son and the host's daughter. They will then discuss their age-set, give the names and subdivisions of their clans, and try to find out if their children belong to any prohibited degrees,¹ so as to evade the possibility of incest. The visit will end by the boy's father declaring *koibou eita*, "I have brought a bull." This is only a polite form of speech, as he has not brought anything with him. The number of cattle to be given is fixed once for all.² There are no individual variations, so as to induce the father of a girl to marry his daughter to a specific suitor for this purpose only. The only difference between rich and poor is that the former will be able to pay the bride-wealth sooner and perhaps add to it two or three goats of small value.

At the end of this visit, if their suit has been accepted, the visitors will receive an intimation to this effect. If it is turned down, they will be told to "*set old age!*" i.e. make war somewhere else.

If the suit is successful, these visits will be continued

¹ Those are discussed further on in "Family".

² The only discussion that will occur at the moment of handing over the bride-wealth is that the girl's parents will be asking that a few goats may be added and, as this is the only point where individual interests will be allowed to speak freely, a good deal of haggling will take place; but even then it will only be about two or three goats.

until *six* kibendi koita have been paid over a period of one month. At every one of these visits the parents of the girl are nominally offered one animal, until the whole number has been completed.

This is the complete list of animals offered during the kibendi koita and constituting the bride-wealth:—

- (1) One bull (*eita*).
- (2) One heifer (*moita*).
- (3) One cow in calf (*roriat neo*).
- (4) One cow with sucking calf (*iouaget*).
- (5) Fourteen goats, called *iouaget ap ko* or *tet ap ko*, i.e. "the cattle of the hut."

To these are added another five goats, called *kogiunat eita*, i.e. "to increase the bull", that is to make the bull of the first kibendi koita equivalent in value to one cow.

On this fifth visit nowadays one adds one cow with its calf and one heifer. This is a custom adopted during the last few years, as the bride-wealth has gone up from two cows, two calves, and one bull, to three cows, two calves, two heifers, and one bull. The number of goats or sheep included in the tug'ap koita is nineteen plus four, given at different ceremonies¹: thus altogether eight head of cattle and normally twenty-three goats,² or sheep.

On the sixth and last visit no "gifts" of cows are made. This day is called *kagecham*, that of believing and of love. The girl's parents, to mark their acceptance of the suit, ceremonially anoint the boy's parents on the forehead with butter, and the boy's father thanks them by promising to add to the bride-wealth a goat, known as *arriet ap koilet*.

¹ At the following ceremonies: (1) Last kibendi koita; (2) *chutet ap injor*; (3) *Ratet*; (4) *Suet ap tuga*. Those four goats are of small value as they have all been recently weaned.

² The above enumeration is a very strict one. The Kipsigis pride themselves in the fact that when they give away the bride-wealth they count only the adult head of cattle, the offspring following the parent "as a gift". To cover their Jaluo neighbours with opprobrium they say "the people who, in their transactions, count the offspring of cattle".

(c) CHUTET AP INJJOR

Now that everything has been arranged by his parents, the suitor, accompanied by a friend, *motiryot*, will pay a call on his future parents-in-law. This visit is called *chutet ap injjor*. Injjor is the side of the house where relations by marriage sit when they visit their parents-in-law. Chutet ap injjor, i.e. entering and sitting down at the injjor side of the hut, is a ceremonial way of telling the suitor that he has been accepted as son-in-law. On this visit he informs his mother-in-law that he has brought her a goat, but, as in the previous cases, this is only a message of goodwill. The *arrtet ap injjor* will be given together with the rest of the bride-wealth.

(d) KIILU (THEY BRING)

In the month of the girl's *yatet ap oret* everything is, usually, ready for her marriage. Beer and food is prepared in great quantities by the boy's parents, and when everything is ready, the husband sends a warrior, accompanied by a little girl and a small boy, to fetch the bride. On their arrival at the bride's hut her parents hand over their daughter to them and then anoint all four of them on the forehead with butter. The bride's mother also makes her a gift of a calabash full of milk and tied all round with *kerundut*.¹ On inquiring about the meaning of this calabash I was told that it was given to the girl "so that she may not go to her husband with empty hands". The *korossiot* is carried at many other ceremonies; it is, like the *labotu*, a sign of fertility.

The marriage ceremony will take place at the father's hut if the son is being married for the first time; and at the bridegroom's hut if he already has a wife.

It is very nearly dark when the bride arrives, escorted by the warrior and the children. As soon as her future

¹ This is the name of the sacred *korossiot* when the plant is still young.

husband sees her, he asks her to come into the hut ; but she pretends that she is not willing to cross the threshold until the husband offers her a goat, when she will be free to go in.

(e) RATET (THE TYING)

Round the interior of the marriage hut are sitting the parents of the couple as well as the elders of the village, sipping their beer through the long rogorosiek. The bride and bridegroom have, respectively, a best man and a matron of honour, a married couple called *motirenik*. In all ceremonies the duty of the *motiryot* is to give the lead during the different phases of the ceremony, so that it may be performed according to the established rules. The bridegroom is dressed in his best cow or goat skin, called *sumet*, and the girl wears a white skin, the *kiskisto*, and the *nariet* headdress of initiation. This is worn on many festive occasions.

During the "tying" the onlookers sing the following song :—

<i>Oya oye ee ooya</i> (ch. hü ü)	<i>Oya oye ee eoya</i> (ch hü ü).
<i>Kibongo tieni ee eoya</i>	{ ch } <i>kibo kugo ak paba</i>
It was for whom this song	{ hü ü } it was for great
	<i>ee eoya</i> (ch. hü ü)
	grandfather and father

<i>Kisolum koila ee eoya</i>	{ ch }	<i>bo tumi mureret ee eoya</i>	{ ch }
We belong to stone	{ hü ü }	of this ceremony's bride	{ hü ü }

<i>Ko kitun mureret ee eoya</i>	{ ch }	<i>mureret ago chebyoset</i>
We have married the bride	{ hü ü }	bride and then old woman
		<i>ee eoya</i> { ch }
		{ hü ü }

Oye kurur ee (ch ee kurur ee)
(blessing)

The two couples will now go outside and four times round the mabwai carrying korossiek in their hands. They then enter the hut and walk in procession round the *teret ap mayuek*, the beer-pot which is firmly embedded in the ground

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in the middle of the hut. An elder ¹ holds aloft four long drinking pipes, called rogorosiek, and as the procession passes underneath the arch formed by them, he spits beer on to their breasts, while he sings the following incantation, the final word of each line being repeated by all present in a very deep voice :—

Olenjin kai burgey ole burgey
 You tell (the people) of this hut be warm say be warm
 Ch.—*burgey*.

Olenjin kai limnyo ole
 You tell the people of this hut have fruitful
limnyo
 intercourse say have fruitful intercourse
 Ch.—*limnyo*.

Ngoba tuga ngenj long ole long
 If gone the cattle (to) salt lick (they may) return say return ²
 Ch.—*long*.

Olenjin murenik bore ole bore
 You tell the warriors may capture (cattle) say may capture ³
 Ch.—*bore*.

Olenjin chebiosok burgey ole burgey.
 You tell the old women ⁴ be warm say be warm.
 Ch.—*burgey*.

The procession will now go out again, passing four times round the mabwai and then round the teret ap mayuek, ⁵ while everything is repeated in a similar fashion. When the Poyot ⁶ has finished repeating his blessings, the two couples sit down on a skin, the bridegroom having his bride on his right, and the motirenik next to them in a similar attitude.

The poyot now gives segutiet grass to each couple, and the two motirenik show them how to twist it and make a bracelet. He then hands to the boy's mother the remnants

¹ As the beer is sipped through the rogorosiek and not through the sacred calabash (komda) any elder can officiate, and the presence of the Poyot ap Tumda is not necessary.

² That they may not be attacked by enemies.

³ May our warriors capture many cattle.

⁴ The two mothers.

⁵ Beer-pot. ⁶ Elder.

of his kimnyet porridge, which the mother must keep and never allow anyone to eat of it. The bridegroom, imitating his motiryot, makes the bracelet and places it four times on the right wrist of the bride, while she does the same thing to him. When he has finished tying the segutiet, the bridegroom extols his mother-in-law for "bearing the bride" and promises to add to the bride-wealth one goat for her. This goat is called "arrtet ap ratet".

The ceremony is now finished and the guests depart, the couple remaining together. If this is not the bridegroom's first wife, they will sleep in the hut of one of his other wives until he has built a hut for the new one. In many clans it is also the custom to send a little boy to spend the first night with them, "so that their intercourse may be fertile."

Ratet is the first of a long series of marriage ceremonies, every one of which celebrates a further stage in married life. Thus the handing over of the marriage cattle, the birth of the first child, etc., are all celebrated by a special ceremony which has some after effects on the position of the couple, or stands as a milestone, after the passing of which no recourse to divorce may be had by either party.

The tying of the segutiet bracelet, celebrated by the Ratet ceremonies, is of special importance, as a woman can have segutiet tied only once on her wrist, and thus can only once be married according to the ancient customs.

Thus a divorced woman or a widow cannot be married a second time with the same forms, and in times past she was not considered as married at all, but was said to *pai-ke*, that is to cohabit with a man. Nowadays, if the second husband pays the bride-wealth, his marriage will be valid, in spite of the fact that his wife is not able to go through ratet. *Pai-ke*, which is not a term of opprobrium, is reserved now for those couples who live together without the man having taken any steps towards the payment of the marriage cattle, as in the case of a runaway wife or of a widow living with her lover.

The young folk often take advantage of the strict ratet customs. When a warrior is in love with a girl, he waits for the day of yatet ap oret,¹ and immediately she steps forward from the ceremony, he ties the segutiet on her wrist. The binding force of the segutiet is such that nobody will attempt to marry that girl, unless the boy who made ratet ceremonially divorced this girl by anointing her with butter. More often than not, he will run away after his action and the girl will join him at the first opportunity. They will then send a goat to the girl's father as "nioet ap kat", i.e. to apologize for their rash behaviour, and will promise that they will start collecting cattle straight away, so as to pay the tug' ap koita (cattle of marriage) as soon as possible.

Kabwatereret

This is a form of betrothal between an infant girl and a grown-up man, resorted to in very special circumstances.

When a whole district suffers from famine, so that the help of relations and neighbours cannot be invoked, a man with a very small daughter can take her to a rich district and go about asking if anybody wants to marry his child. When a man is found, the father will have a goat sacrificed at the prospective husband's mabwai and its entrails examined. If they are auspicious, the bridegroom ties the segutiet on the child's wrist² and in return he gives the father an advance payment on the bride-wealth; either a cow with calf to supply him with milk, or a bull,³ which he can exchange for eleusine grain or maize. Until the day of initiation the girl will live with her parents, and on her coming out the ratet ceremony will have to be repeated in full, as the first "tying" performed during childhood is only considered as

¹ The tying, of course, cannot take place before a girl has come out of initiation. We will see that the kabwatereret is an exception to this rule.

² This is the only exception to the general rule that "tying" cannot be performed before initiation.

³ We shall see that only the bull, of the bride-wealth, and not the cow, can be thus sold.

a seal of property affixed to the bride. Furthermore, the "husband" will have to pay the six kibendi koita visits to his parents-in-law after the yatet-ap-oret, as if he had never tied the segutiet. It is said that, if at this moment the parents have changed their mind, they can return the cattle given by the bridegroom to them and ask him to anoint the girl, so as to set her free. But he can refuse to do so and take his case to the elders.

This form of infant betrothal is not considered as in any way disgraceful to the girl, but as a normal way for her father to solve a difficult problem.

Although famine is the usual cause of Kabwatereret, there are other reasons for its performance. When a man wants to cement his friendship with another man, he tries to give him his sister in marriage. If he meets with resistance from his father, he will have the segutiet tied on one of his younger sisters and will confront his parents with the accomplished fact. This is not usual in Peelkut, Puret, and Waldai, but is said to be of frequent occurrence in the Sotik district.

(f) SUET AP TUGA (EXAMINING THE CATTLE)

As long as three or more years after ratet, the tug' ap koita may not have been handed over to the parents-in-law. They are not given gradually over a period of time, but slowly assembled until the eight head of cattle and the twenty-three goats stand ready in the kraal.

This is a great day, not only for the husband and his father's family, but for all the neighbours living in the same *kokwet*.¹ When the husband or his father announce their intention of calling the young wife's parents to come and take the cattle, all the neighbours prepare great quantities of porridge, milk, and vegetables cooked in blood.²

¹ Village.

² Inguek ap korotik. To cook the vegetables in water on that day would be like throwing a spell of poverty on the couple.

The parents and family of the wife arrive about 1 p.m., when the cows have returned to the kraal and are going to be milked. The more male paternal relations the father-in-law can command to come, the better it is; but the women who accompany them are few and all past their prime.¹ They all go straight to the kraal and examine the cattle like connoisseurs and discuss freely among themselves their good and bad points. When their inspection is over, they go to the husband's hut, and all the men sit on the injjor side, which is always reserved for the wife's family, while their womenfolk sit at the extreme end of injjor, called *tootel*, near the baby's bed in the ground (*itogut ab lakwet*).

The beer is in the middle of the hut, and they all put their rogorosiek into the pot. After a few sips the wife's relations will start disparaging the tug' ap koita and asking for a few more goats, so as "to make their value equal to what it should have been". The husband keeps out of the discussion, but his relations do their best to protect his interests, and after some time a compromise is reached.² Food is now brought and two little children, a boy and a girl, go round with water to wash the hands of the guests. The little girl, after washing the hands of all the women present, approaches the wife's mother and asks her to let her wash her hands; but this she will refuse to do until the son-in-law promises her a goat, called "arrtet neounen eut poöger" (the goat given to the mother-in-law to wash her hands).

To this feast, apart from his close relatives and neighbours, the husband asks members of his clan and of his puriet.³ Members of his ipinda are not necessarily invited. When the beer and great quantities of food have been consumed, the *kaphotuagn*⁴ go outside and stand in front

¹ The reason for this is that only the male relatives are really interested in the cattle as inheritance is in the male line.

² No cattle can be added to the bride-wealth, but only a few goats.

³ Army group.

⁴ A term comprising all the husband's relations-in-law. *Vide* p. 112.

of the mabwai, where the father and mother of the boy are waiting to anoint them with butter, making a special point of sticking a little kipkondolit grass on the father and mother of the bride, as well as on her father's brother and his wife, as a special honour for them. The mother of the husband then hands to the wife's mother and to the wife of the father-in-law's brother two very large calabashes, *kessenissiek*, full of milk. Everybody now goes three times round the mabwai, and the husband's mother-in-law takes the butter from her head and rubs it on her daughter as a blessing. On the following day the kapkotuagn usually take their cattle away; but sometimes they will leave them with their son-in-law for some time longer, if his own cattle are ill and he needs the milk for his children.

The Suet ap Tuga is important as being the prologue to the most significant of all marriage ceremonies, the *katunisiet*, which take place to celebrate the ending of all antagonism about questions of payment between the two families, and after which the bride's father cannot force his daughter to leave her husband, as we shall see in "Divorce", because he has found a rich suitor who can pay the bride-wealth at once.

(g) KATUNISIET

The Katunisiet is, unlike the suet ap tuga, a long and complicated ceremony spread over four days. It gives the husband not only complete authority over his wife, as after Katunisiet she cannot divorce him; but also it makes him independent of his parents-in-law, as, after this ceremony, they cannot force the bride to leave her husband and marry ¹ another man.

Katunisiet, because of the large quantities of food and of beer provided by the husband for the festivities, may take place a few months ² or, more often, a few years after suet

¹ Without ratet.

² After the birth of a child.

ap tuga. A wealthy man will perform katunisiet, especially with his first wife, very quickly, as this enhances his social prestige ; but a poor man will wait for many years, and even then he will need the help of his father's family.

When the husband is ready for the ceremony, he will send word to all his paternal relations and to his mother's brother (mama). He will also invite his kapkotuagn, his kokwet, and his friends among the members of his *clan*, *ipinda*, and *puriet*, all of which must be well represented.

First Day

Early in the morning the relatives assemble outside the husband's hut and the couple appear garbed in new skins. As in all ceremonies they have two motirenik. The husband and his motiryot go and sit by the mabwai, while the wife with her motiryot kneels in front of it. The husband and wife hold a goat between them. Now all the paternal relations of the husband and his mother's brother, as well as all the members of his wife's family present, form a procession, and, as they pass in front of the couple, pour on them and on the goat a little milk. This is done by all except the mother-in-law, who must be careful not to pour any milk on her son-in-law, as it would be an infringement of the rules of avoidance.

When all the procession has passed, the wife and her motiryot follow the womenfolk to a short distance from the hut, while the men return and an elder sacrifices the goat in front of the mabwai and examines the entrails. If they are favourable,¹ the skin is cut off and rings made out of it. A bracelet is then cut out of the skin for the wife² and on the next day a cowrie shell³ is added on each side. The wife wears this bracelet, which is called *serut*, for a week, and

¹ *Vide* "Religion and Magic".

² For some clans it is cut from near the nose of the goat, for others from the chest, or from the foot, and, in that case, the bracelet must have the hoof hanging.

³ Introduced many decades ago by Arab traders.

while she wears it two major restrictions are enforced on her. She is neither allowed to sleep with her husband nor to eat meat during that interval.

This goat has a strange name. It is called *chepengobit*, which is the name of that particular uncleanness attached to the mother after childbirth. After the sacrifice its meat is distributed among all those present, but no man from the husband's *ipinda* can accept it, unless he is related to the husband or the wife in such a way as to have been unable to marry the wife, had she been free.

In the afternoon, about 5 p.m., the beer is put down in the hut and, as the Poyot ap Tumda is present, it is called Mayuek ap Poyot. It is an interesting point, as his presence was not required in the first ceremony of Ratet. This, as well as the importance of the ceremony, shows that Katunisiet, which may be held five, or even ten years after the "tying", is of greater moment than ratet.

The husband, wearing his kiboet calf skin, and the wife, dressed in her kiskista and wearing the nariet, will sit on a skin inside the husband's hut, and the ratet ceremony will be repeated all over again, but this time with the Poyot ap Tumda officiating.

After the ceremony all the women go to sleep in the neighbouring huts, where accommodation has been provided for them, while the men stay up the better part of the night and sip their beer through the rogorosiek.

Second Day

On the next day six very large pots of beer,¹ prepared by the husband's household, are offered to the guests.

(1) There is one pot for the kapkotuagn (relations by marriage), which is put down where the Mayuek ap Poyot was on the preceding day.

(2) One pot for the *Oret* (clan), which assembles in the same house as the kapkotuagn, but sits on the injjor side. This is quite remarkable, as the correct position would have been

¹ Each with an equally large refill.

for the wife's relations to sit on the injjor side. It is, perhaps, an outward sign of respect to show them that they are in their own house and that the husband and his people are visiting them, instead of vice versa (cf. p. 163).

(3) One pot for the Puriet.

(4) One for the *Sanik*, relations through the marriage of the husband's sisters.

(5) One for the kokwet.

(6) One for the Ipinda (age-set).

Each of the last four is drunk in one of the neighbouring huts.

During these festivities all the beer is supplied by the husband, but all his neighbours contribute milk, porridge, and vegetable food. The husband's paternal relations will also bring a young calf and distribute its meat among the guests.

Beer is drunk during the whole of the second day of katusiet and the old women join in. At night everybody is lying about sleeping, some of them having climbed on to the *Tabot* granary; but one seldom sees the Kipsigis fighting after a drinking bout of this duration. They are all extremely well-behaved and orderly.

Third Day, called Keteitei Korossiek

On the evening of the third day a fire is lighted by the mabwai. The couple performing the ceremony, followed by their two motirenik, go four times round the mabwai and, as they do so, the Poyot ap Tumda spits beer on them and blesses them: "May you have many children and many cattle, and may the husband go through this ceremony again." Both husband and wife now take the segutiet bracelets and put them in the fire to burn; they then discard all their finery and put on their everyday garments. Another pot of beer is now brought, called *kiphkorossit*, and the remaining guests stay up drinking all night and well into the morning of the fourth day.

Thus another milestone of married life is passed, and it is of

importance not only because of the increased authority of the man over his wife and his parents-in-law, but also on account of the prestige a man acquires by performing a ceremony closing the era of payment of the bride-wealth, and of the great quantities of beer and food supplied to his guests. This prestige is marked by the title of *Poyot*, by which even a young man is known after this ceremony; although it is true that in the majority of cases it takes so long to accomplish that, by this time, most men are old enough to be called *Poyot* in virtue of their greying hair.

Ketebi njecheret (He sits on the sacred stool)

This is a ceremony which takes place after *Katunisiet* and before the last of the ceremonies connected with marriage. It is not really a marriage ceremony, but a *rite de passage* to mark the passing from middle to old age.

At this ceremony as many people as possible from the husband's age-set (*ipinda*) are invited, and he supplies enough beer to last for two days. The beer is drunk in two huts. In the one are gathered men from the husband's *ipinda*, and into the other the *mistoet*¹ are invited. The ceremony takes place in the morning, and the *Poyot ap Tumda* is there to mark its importance by his presence. The sacred *njecheret* stool of the elders is placed outside the hut and the *Poyot* spits a little beer on it. The initiate then is made to sit on the stool and is at once surrounded by members of his age-set. The *Poyot* then recites the following blessings :—

Olenji ka tinye njecheret nebaibai
 You say (this) hut have the "sacred stool" which happy
Baibai ole baibai iis, ole iis
 Happy say happy iis, say iis²
Tinye ipin ole tinye ch tinye
 Have age-set say have have

¹ *Mistoet* means shepherd but is in reality applied to all young men.

² Blessing.

Kokim *ole kim* *ch kim*
 He is brave say brave brave
Kotinye sanik *tinye ole tinye* *ch tinye*
 He has sanik relations ¹ have say have have
Mii tuga ole mii *ch mii*
 There is cattle say there is there is
Tinye tibik *ole tinye* *chor. tinye*
 Have daughters ² say have have
Chang lagok *ole chang* *ch chang.*
 Many children say many many.

Eworga

The purpose of this ceremony, which can take place any time after Katunisiet and Ketebi njecheret, is to reduce the formalities of avoidance between mother and son-in-law. Up to now, whenever the husband met his mother-in-law, he had to go out of his way to let her pass, he had to speak to her from a distance, never to enter her hut or eat food cooked by her.

The husband's first task in all these ceremonies is to find two motirenik who have already been through *eworga*. He then notifies his mother-in-law of his intention of performing the ceremony, and a day suitable to both parties is agreed on. The husband now prepares beer with his wife and, when it is ready, he sets aside two calabashes of it. These are carried by the woman motiryot and by the wife, who also takes with her a *kerechet* ³ full of ground *peek*.⁴ The husband and the motiryot lead the way, driving a goat before them.

On arriving at the mother-in-law's hut, they all stop at the entrance, and the goat is made to enter the hut. The *poöger* ⁵ ties the goat inside the hut and comes out to greet the party, while the husband is standing at some distance. She then empties the two calabashes of beer into an empty pot and, taking some of the beer she had prepared, refills

¹ i.e. He has many married sisters.

² So that he may collect much cattle from their bride-wealth.

³ Basket.

⁴ Eleusine grass.

⁵ Mother-in-law.

them with it. Her daughter now gives her the peek, which the mother mixes with some of her own, and gives the *kimnyet*¹ thus prepared to her daughter.

The ceremony is now finished, and husband, wife, and motirenik return to the husband's home, where a pot of beer is ready, as rejoicings, to which all their friends² are asked, will be kept up for two days. At the mother-in-law's house also there is beer on that and the following night to celebrate the event.

After the husband has eaten the *kimnyet* prepared by his poöger, he is no longer subject to two ceremonial avoidances, that of entering her hut and of eating food cooked by her.

The agricultural and pastoral importance of the wife. The necessity of polygyny for a rich man

Although a fuller and more detailed description of Kipsigis economics is given in a separate chapter, it is not possible to write of marriage without speaking of its economic background.

The main interests of the average Kipsigis are vested in his children and his cattle. A great herd is not only a source of wealth but also of social prestige and of honours in public life. In tending the cattle and helping her husband to increase his stock the importance of the wife is outstanding.

When a man has acquired a considerable herd, he will never keep it all in his own kraal, as he fears that bad luck in the shape of an enemy raid or of foot and mouth disease may destroy his fortunes with a single stroke. Thus it is his custom to distribute about half his cattle among different friends living as far away from each other as possible, so as to minimize the risks.³ This cattle still belongs to him, but as long as his friends are alive he cannot take them back, drink their milk, or utilize them in any way, unless he is

¹ Solid porridge.

² There is no need to invite specially the puriet or the ipinda, but the husband's father must always be present.

³ This custom of lending one's cattle out is called *kimanagan*.

exceptionally hard up ; for these reasons he must keep the remaining half of his herd himself. Here again it is impossible to supervise personally all his cattle, as well as that given to him by his own friends as *kimanagan*, and he must have somebody who shares his interests to help him. This role is played by the wife.

A man may wait for more than eighteen years before his second marriage. By that time he will have a reasonably grown-up son. He will then build a hut for his first wife (*kerotyety*) at a good distance from his own and will have that son to live near her and protect her. A great many of his cattle are now entrusted to this new household. If the herd is large, the son receives every year for his services one heifer, two goats, and two ewes from the natural increase of the herd, and in a short time he will be able to pay the bride-wealth and have a wife for himself. Elder sons of each "hut" are thus able to marry much sooner than their brothers, who are dependent on their father for a longer period. The father then marries again, and the same process is repeated at more or less short intervals, according to the wealth of a man. Thus, not only does the husband profit by the activities of his wives, but he can always live with his younger bride. From time to time he tours the country to inspect his different kraals and spends a little of his time with each wife, living the longest with the one he likes best. Rich men with great cattle-wealth always have a great number of wives living, quite often as many as twenty or thirty miles apart and keeping their husband's cattle. My friend Arap Terer, a great Kiruogindet neo, had married eight wives, one of whom was living in Nandi. The laibon witch-doctors, who have just been expelled, had collected hundreds of head of cattle through their practices, and they had innumerable wives all over the Kipsigis reserve to look after them. One of the most famous of them is said, on good evidence, to have left 300 children !

For his agriculture also a man needs his wives, but, as

they normally live so far apart, they are not such a great source of wealth. The size of their fields is usually sufficient to support the household, but not large enough to leave anything over for sale or exchange. It is only the husband who owns comparatively large maize fields, the produce of which is used for trading with the Indians, and these fields are always near his favourite hut. When his agricultural activities are great, he builds a second hut next to his own, so that one of his younger wives can be at hand when her services are required.

The first wife (*kerotyet*) with her longer experience usually has more authority than the others, but a great deal depends on her ability to bear children, and especially a son. The son of the first wife, although he may be younger than that of the second, is considered as the head of the family when his father is away, and it rests with him to distribute his cattle when he is dead. Seniority among co-wives (*siet*) does not play such an important role in ceremonial and authority, as each one must have her own hut and thus her own field. They are all independent of each other economically; this and the distance which usually separates them makes it difficult for the *kerotyet* to bully them. But the first wife has more influence over the husband, as she knows him and his interests better than the others and has lived a longer time with him. A younger wife will address a senior one as *iyoo* (mother), but this only if there is a considerable difference of age between them.

CHILDBIRTH

However important the value of a wife for her economic activities may be, she is first and foremost the mother of a man's children, and it is mainly this function that makes her, in the eyes of a Kipsigis, something more than a chattel and an instrument of pleasure.

When a woman has noticed that her menstrual blood has stopped flowing, she tells her husband and sexual relations

usually cease at this moment ; but the wife can go on her daily round of life as usual until labour begins. The birth of the child is expected in the ninth month, and the woman's friends and the midwife are advised of the coming of the child. The midwife is called *chebiosset ab sigissiet* (old woman of birth) and enjoys a very exalted position in her *kokwet*. When the wife has her pains, the husband leaves the hut and goes to sleep in the *singroina*. From this day until a month after the birth no man can enter her hut. The woman during parturition assumes a crouching attitude.

When the child is born, a few women go and ask the husband for blood. "What shall I bleed?" asks the father, and he is told to bleed the cow or the bull according to the sex of the infant. The mother will drink this blood and use it in her food, as it is believed that this will quickly restore her strength. The mother is confined to her hut for three days after the birth of a girl, and for four days after the birth of a boy. For six days after birth she cannot touch anything in the hut with her hands and must eat her food with a stick. On the seventh day her hair is shaved and she bathes in the river¹ ; but for a whole year she will not be able to touch anything with her hands without washing at the *kipsiluet*, which is a calabash full of water, suspended from a tree. This ceremonial uncleanness is called *chepengobit*, and it is believed that, if the mother is not careful and touches anything with her hands, not only that object but all others of the same species belonging to her husband will suffer. Thus, if she touches meat or milk, the cows of her husband will become barren ; if she touches her porridge, his fields will wither, and so on.

The baby is kept at the breast for only a year and after that period of time is weaned and given solid food. As the baby has no teeth to bite it, solid porridge is made into huge balls and pushed down its throat with the fingers. This

¹ A goat bearing the name of her uncleanness, *chepengobit*, is also sacrificed by some clans.

is one of the causes making for the large infantile mortality among the Kipsigis.

A month after the birth, the husband returns to his home. During this time no man can see the baby, as a man's face is said to frighten it so much that it will not stop crying and will eventually become so feeble that it will die. If a man sees the child by mistake, he must immediately spit on its face ; or, if he did not know of the age of the child at the moment he was passing it, the mother will run after him and ask him to spit on a leaf, so that she may rub it on the infant.

Although the husband returns to his hut after a month, sexual intercourse cannot take place before a year has elapsed, that is, after the child has been weaned. If a man has many wives, he will go visiting them during this time ; if not, he will try to find an unmarried sweetheart and sleep with her at the singroina.

NAMING THE CHILD

After the child has been born, he will be told the names of all his dead ancestors belonging to his clan-subdivision, but irrespective of sex. This is done until the infant sneezes, when it is assumed that the ancestor's spirit has entered the child and is answering the questions of the women. The women greet the ancestor by laughing ceremonially three times if the infant is a girl and four if it is a boy. This ceremonial laugh is called *yaas*. The dead ancestor's spirit enters the body the very moment the child breathes. His sex is of no importance, as a man's spirit can enter the body of a female child, and vice versa. I have also come across cases of two children born at close intervals and being named after the same ancestor. Their families have never been able to explain to me how the same spirit was in the two bodies at the same time, and this problem never really worried them.

The birth of twins is not considered as a bad omen ;

but, as Arap Seuer put it, "It is not pleasant for a woman to give birth to more than one baby like the dogs; but they are our children, why should we not like them?"

NAMES

(1) The first name given to the child is called *kurennet* and describes a deed or a peculiarity of the ancestor who has answered the women's questions, as, for instance, *kipseuer*, meaning "the one with uneven teeth".

(2) Every boy and girl has two *kainet ap musarek*, two "names of porridge", by which they are called when young. The first one describes one of the "gesta" of one's father as *kipkallia*—the peacemaker. The second is related to a circumstance of the birth, as, for instance, *kiplangat*, the one born at night.

(3) The *Salanik*. A short time after the child is born an old woman takes an empty calabash with her and visits a warrior renowned for his heroic feats of arms. The warrior fills the calabash with milk from his own cows and the child is made to drink it. These visits are repeated, as usual, four times for the boys and three for the girls. After the last visit the women make up a song about the actions of the warrior, and this song now belongs to the child. The words are remembered from past songs, and the meaning is very seldom clear to the Kipsigis themselves. Ex. gr.

Salanik of Chepkoech

<i>Kongoi</i>	<i>lapnyobi</i>	<i>komii choruet</i>	<i>kok</i>
Thank you who first got out he is the friend (of) the place			
<i>Arap Ingowa</i>	<i>kongoi</i>	<i>tibik ap Sironet.</i>	<i>Kongoi</i>
(of) A. Ingowa thank you girls of Sironet. Thank you			
<i>tamarugul</i>	<i>kipsonwet</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>Sosit</i>
who cannot stay without the baby's milk calabash at Sosit			
<i>Kongoi</i>	<i>tapysio</i>	<i>ei' en Kericho</i>	
Thank you who refused ox at Kericho			
<i>Kongoi</i>	<i>tapkeror</i>	<i>oret.</i>	
Thank you who closed the roads.			
etc., etc.			

All the "tap" describing an action can be used as Salanik : thus Tapnyobi, Tamarugut, Tapysio, etc.

The milk given by the warrior is said to impart some of his past or present strength to the child, but does not create any relationship between them.

(4) *Katchael*. This is a nickname given to every Kipsigis because of some peculiarity, ex. gr. Rorogna, the fat one ; Sigilai, the thin one ; Ngossura, the big eater ; Korgoren, the fidgety one. Those names are usually made by sweet-hearts to call each other by, and they are the only names a wife may use when addressing her husband.

(5) *Men* on coming out of initiation are called by the name of their father ; thus, Arap Seuer, i.e. the son of Kipseuer, Arap Terer, the son of Kipterer. The name used to describe the father is the name by which he is most familiarly known. Thus, if a man is asked his name, he will first give the name by which he is more commonly known and then the name of his father ; thus, Kiprator Arap Rono, Kipterer Arap Sigilai, etc.

Between the moment of their birth and their initiation children go through many ceremonies which it would be outside the scope of this work to study. I will do no more than mention them by name :—

(1) and (2) Katumet ap lakwet and Kalaget ap ingoryet = to protect the child from sickness.

(3) Kangetunet = thanksgiving for the birth of the child.

(4) Lotet ap kelek = knocking the two front lower teeth out.

(5) Rutet ap itich = making a hole in the upper part of the ears.

(6) Parparet = making a hole in the lobes of the two ears.

(7) Kaburpuret = to make the children strong and give them health.

CHILD MORTALITY

Child mortality is very great among the Kipsigis. In many families it reaches 50 per cent between the ages of one month and 5 years, and it is very seldom below 25 per cent. The

main reasons for what appears to us an abnormal death-rate appear to me to be the following :—

(1) Malnutrition of the infant. The child is taken from the breast and put suddenly on an extraordinary diet, consisting mainly of solid porridge and raw meat.

(2) The uneven temperature and draughts of the hut and the insufficient protection of the child, which is dressed in a hard untanned goatskin. A good 25 per cent of the children die from pneumonia.

(3) Amoebic dysentery, the most prevalent of all diseases in the Kipsigis Reserve. Also malaria.

The plight of a family where children have died is brought to the attention of Asis by putting a chain, called *sirimda*, round the right hand of the next eldest child. If there is an epidemic of deaths in a family, a little tuft of hair, known as *Songoniet*, is left to grow on the front of the head, and when it is shaved a brass bracelet, called *taet*, is added on the right hand. Children who have lost many elder brothers and sisters are called *tegerisiek* and have special ceremonies performed for their welfare (Kaburpuret ap *tegerisiek*). At initiation also they wear a special costume to attract the attention of Asis, so that he may protect them from disease.

ADOPTION (NGWOSET)

Adoption of one Kipsigis by another Kipsigis is not possible. Only members of a foreign tribe can be adopted. This was of common occurrence in the past, when the Kipsigis brought back members of enemy tribes as prisoners and adopted them into the community. When their *katchaet*, song of praise, is sung, they are distinguished from the other Kipsigis by the adjective of *punotion*,¹ and one often hears this expression used when inquiring about a man. The ceremony of adoption is a fairly simple one. The adoptive father invites members of his clan and of his *puriet*,

¹ Meaning "our enemy" or "our stranger" (?).

sacrifices a goat, and declares that the stranger is a member of his family from now on and that he is to be considered as his son.

The only case of Ngwoset I came across was the adoption of a poor Kikuyu by a childless old divorced woman, who wanted somebody to help her in her fields. She carried out the ceremony according to Kipsigis custom, and the Kikuyu is now considered as her son, a member of her clan and of her father's puriet (army group).

KATUNCHI TOLOCH,¹ MARRIAGE BETWEEN WOMEN

Apart from her economic duties a woman is bound in honour to bear heirs to her husband. If she fails in that, she will seek to "marry" another woman, so that the latter's children may be considered as her own.

There are various reasons why it is important for a man to have sons:—

(1) A question of social prestige for the man and of standing for his wife. She will lose the favours of her husband if she has no son.

(2) The property of every hut is kept separately from that of the others. The cattle received as bride-wealth from the marriage of the daughters can only be used by brothers from the same mother to marry in their turn.² If there are no sons, the mother uses her daughters' tug' ap koita to "marry" another woman.

(3) The spirits of the deceased paternal ancestors are reincarnated in the children. But this is only a minor consideration, as even the male ancestors can be reincarnated in girls.

"Katunchi toloch" with another woman is not entered upon before the wife has waited for a long time to see if she will have male descendants, and she is usually quite

¹ "She marries man toloyta". The toloyta is one of the wooden pillars of the hut, which is discarded when the father is dead. Thus she marries someone to "strengthen the hut".

² *Vide* "Property", p. 205.

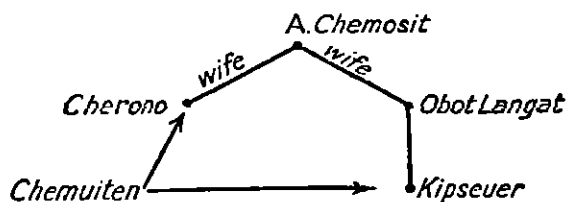
old when she performs that ceremony with her husband's sanction.

Nothing distinguishes it from an ordinary marriage. The bride-wealth is given to the girl's parents and the ratet ceremony duly performed. The bride is usually given either to one of the husband's sons by another wife or to one of his brothers. He has no rights over her, as she is "owned" by her wife, and his children by her are considered as the children of her wife's husband.

Katunchi, toloch serves to break many Kipsigis rules of behaviour and some of their strictest prohibitions.

(1) Ratet can only be performed once. In this case the sonless wife goes through Ratet again and actually has the segutiet tied on her wrist by her "wife".

(2) It breaks the strictest rules of exogamy. Let us take a definite example :—



Arap Chemosit has two wives, Cherono and Obot Langat. Cherono has no sons and Obot Langat has a son, Kipseuer. Cherono "marries" a girl, Chemuiten. Chemuiten calls Cherono "iyo" (mother), and the husband of her "mother" *pondet ap yugoi* (father-in-law)! She talks of Kipseuer as of her husband, but Kipseuer calls her iyo, as she is the wife of a woman he also calls mother. When I pointed out all these anomalies to my Kipsigis friends, I was told that this was their custom, and I was made to feel that I had committed a very serious breach of etiquette in even broaching the subject.

Nowadays this institution is sometimes used to very different ends. Thus Mariamu, a fat unmarried woman who

lived near my tent, had returned to the Reserve after earning quite a large sum of money as a prostitute in a town. This she invested in cattle and "married" two women, whose "husbands" and their children are a substantial source of income to her, as they help her to herd the cows and till large fields of maize for her.

WIDOWS

At the death of the husband his widows go and live either with his brothers or with his father's brothers' sons, i.e. his paternal first cousins. One widow is allotted to each man, the preference being given to an unmarried one. This man is called *Kipkondit*, and his relation to the widow is, in many respects, different from that of a husband. The children he has by her are not considered as his, but are the children of her deceased husband and bear his name. When the *Kipkondit* dies, his sons by the widow do not inherit from him, as they "belong to a different hut".

To speak of the *Kipkondit* as "inheriting" the widow of the deceased is a mistake, as the only reason for which she goes to live with him is to seek his protection. Widows very often refuse to live with their *Kipkondit* and have a sweetheart who shares their hut and helps them with their cattle and their fields. However rigid the institution might have been in former years, nowadays the *Kipkondit* does not enforce his rights very rigorously, and a great number of widows live with their friends in a free union, called *pai-ke*; but even in this case the children are the deceased man's and bear his name, as he was the one who tied the segutiet and gave the bride-wealth.

ADULTERY AND DIVORCE

The regulated prenuptial freedom of boys and girls does not exhaust their interest in the other sex to such an extent as to make adultery of rare occurrence. The custom of marrying the girls so young without troubling to find out what their

opinion is and of giving them, very often, to husbands considerably older than themselves induces an abnormal number of them to run away to a sweetheart during the first years of their married life. The older women, also, give way to temptation while their husband is away living with another wife.

When this occurs, there are for the husband two ways of redress, to beat his wife or to divorce her. Against her partner he cannot claim any damages, but he can fight him, if he catches him in his hut. This is as far as he can go, as, if he spears him, he must pay the full damages, *tug' a' muget*, to the man's family, and no extenuating circumstances are taken into consideration.

Such a thing as adultery of the husband does not exist. He is not pledged to be faithful to his wife; but a jealous and strong-minded woman will abuse him in violent terms if he favours the same person too often. Jealousy about a single act is uncommon, and it is the frequent and reiterated preference shown towards a single woman which usually infuriates a Kipsigis wife.

The dissolution of a bond is quite as important as its inception. Divorce, in this case, helped to focus my attention on what is really important in Kipsigis marriage.

Before giving the more detailed and legal description of this institution, I would like to cite two of the cases which were tried near my tent. I have chosen them, not only because I knew the judges and some of the actors, but because I think that they help to illustrate in a very characteristic fashion the rules of Kipsigis divorce.

FIRST CASE

Arap Kururiet has gone through the Ratet ceremony with a woman, but he has not yet paid the cattle to her father. His wife lived with him for four months and then ran away to Arap Maritim. The parents of the girl are interested in only one thing, the bride-wealth, and they ask Arap Maritim

to hand it over, as Arap Kururiet has not had time to do so. Arap Maritim, who is a wealthy man, sends the tug' ap koita to his wife's father and, hoping to legitimize his position as lover, performs the Ratet ceremony. The woman lives with Arap Maritim for two years and has a child by him; but she eventually tires of him and runs back to her former husband, Arap Kururiet, who has raised no objection to her "marriage" with Arap Maritim. He is only too glad to have a wife who brings him a child.

As soon as Arap Maritim learns of his "wife's" whereabouts, he comes to take her back, but her husband has now made up his mind that he is not going to let her go. The judges are summoned and the two parties briefly present their cases, as follows.

Arap Maritim. I am the only one who is entitled to call this woman my own. I have given the tug' ap koita to her father, thus nobody else has any rights over her. I have also had a child by her, thus it is impossible for her to be divorced from me.

Arap Kururiet. What Arap Maritim says is true, but the parents of the girl had no right to accept the bride-wealth from him, as I was the one to have tied the segutiet on her wrist. As for the child, it is mine, as I alone can be called husband.

My wise old friend, Arap Terer, who was *Kiruogindet neo*, i.e. President of the court, after quoting a great number of precedents, delivered his judgment in this form:—

"Arap Maritim is a good man, he did everything that he should have done. But his transfer of the tug' ap koita, and having a child by a woman with whom he did ratet, is of no avail against her first husband. The one who has first tied the segutiet is the only husband, if there is no divorce."

He then declared that the woman should stay with Arap Kururiet, but that the latter would have to pay 60s. to Arap Maritim,¹ who had fed for one year a child which has

¹ Arap Kururiet promptly found the money by selling one of his cows.

now become his own. The parents of the girl must also give back the bride-wealth they received from Arap Maritim, with all its subsequent increase of stock. Remarks :—

Three points of importance emerge from the quotation of this case :—

(1) The payment of the bride-wealth does not give a man stronger rights than those conferred on the husband by the sole fact that he was the first to tie the segutiet. The performance of a ceremony at the correct moment is more important than mere material facts. When the case is between two men, one of whom was the first to do ratet and the other to give the bride-wealth, it is the performance of ratet which is the more important.

On the other hand the father-in-law can by a judgment oblige his son-in-law to divorce his daughter, if he has not given him the bride-wealth after a reasonable period of time. Thus the importance of ratet varies with the person towards whom its binding strength is pointed as a defensive argument.

(2) In this, as in *all* cases of adultery, if the woman has had a child by her lover, the husband not only cannot ask for damages, but has to indemnify him for what he has spent on the upkeep. "That is so," said Arap Terer, "because he loses the child, which has only been to him a source of expense. For the wife's food he is not paid, as he has 'used' her."

(3) The fact that physical parenthood is not ignored. Arap Terer told me that the son of Arap Maritim will only call Arap Kururiet father ; but he cannot marry any of Arap Maritim's children, as Arap Maritim "has born him".

SECOND CASE

Arap Rono marries a wife and, eventually, transfers the bride-wealth to her father. A year after she runs off to Arap Rustage, who also ties the segutiet and sends to her parents the cattle of the bride-wealth. The parents notify Arap Rono of the facts and also of their intention of returning him his cattle.

Arap Rono has many wives and, when he hears of this escapade, he takes no action of any sort. Meanwhile his wife has two children with Arap Rustage, but grows very tired of him and one night decides to bewitch him, for which purpose she gets up in the dead of night and, thinking that he is asleep, takes his loin belt (*legetiet*) away from him. She then picks up the *sosiot* (milk calabash) and describes circles round his head with those two articles.

Arap Rustage, although pretending to be asleep, has seen everything and he calls the judges the next day to try his wife for witchcraft. The wife now pretends that she is mad, she refuses to suckle her baby and by signs gives the assembled people to understand that she cannot speak or hear what they say. A warrior is detailed by the judges to beat her to see if that is true, but although she is very cruelly whipped she persists in the same attitude.

Arap Rustage asks the judges to grant him divorce from this woman, as he refuses to live with a witch, and asks for his cattle back.

Arap Rono, the first husband, who has heard of the case, also arrives on the scene, accuses his wife of adultery with Arap Rustage, and asks for the cattle he has given as bride-wealth to be returned.

The judges, after hearing both parties, deliver the following judgment :—

(1) The first husband is allowed to divorce her. Her running away and adultery are proved. He is allowed to perform the divorce ceremony on the spot.

(2) Arap Rustage's demand is dismissed. He cannot divorce her, as he has had children by her. As he refuses to live with her through fear of her witchcraft, the woman is sent to her father, and Arap Rustage is ordered to send her milk every day to feed the infants.

(3) A curse (*chubisyet*) is put upon the woman. "If you have fooled us by pretending you cannot speak or hear, may you be mute and dumb all your life."

Remarks :—

In this case the fact that the woman had children by Arap Rustage, even though she was not legally married to him, the segutiet having been tied before, prevents him from getting a divorce, as the first husband is not asking for his wife back. The second " husband " also cannot seek divorce on the ground of having tied the segutiet after his wife had been previously " tied ". This is a fact which can be quoted against him, but not one that he can cite in his own defence.

This case had a tragic ending. I was told that as soon as the wife returned to her parents, she stopped simulating dumbness. Two days after that she was found hanged in her father's hut. " My curse has found her out," announced Arap Terer when he came to see me.

GROUND FOR DIVORCE

The grounds for divorce vary with the persons who can apply for it. They are the following :—

(1) The husband.

(a) On the ground of the adultery of his wife. He must have caught his wife in criminal conversation himself. No rumours or witnesses can be brought to prove this point against her, unless she had run away to live with her lover.

(b) If he discovers that his wife is an exponent of witchcraft.

(c) If his wife threatens his life. Bad temper, laziness, and barrenness do not constitute sufficient ground for divorce.

(2) *The wife* can only ask for divorce in one case : If her husband is neglecting his conjugal duties in favour of some other woman (to whom he is not married) to such an extent as to lessen to a great degree the probability of her ever becoming a mother. This is considered a great outrage by all her family, and one of her elder brothers is usually deputed to fight her husband. If, after this chastisement, the husband does not mend his ways, the girl, supported

by her family, asks for divorce against him. It is a great crime for the Kipsigis to frustrate a woman of motherhood.

It must be noted here that for no other reason can the wife apply for a divorce, even if her husband by his frequent whippings endangers her life. Even her family will not help her in that case. If the husband kills her, her people cannot even ask for compensation, as he has already given the bride-wealth. On the other hand it should not be forgotten that, if a husband is too brutal, his wife will run away from him without asking for formal divorce; other men are usually glad to have them, as they do not have to give the bride-wealth.

(3) *Both* will apply for divorce if they have unwittingly married within the prohibited degrees, but this only if they are very closely related; otherwise they will ask the elders to condone their marriage.

(4) *The parents of the wife* can ask for divorce, even against her will,¹ if after Ratet the husband shows that he does not intend to transfer the bride-wealth. After the divorce his wife can go on living with him, but she will not be considered as his wife, and any children she may have *after* the divorce are not considered as belonging to him.

(5) *A third party.* If a man can prove that he has tied the segutiet when the girl came out of initiation, the second marriage is annulled. This tying of the segutiet is not the Ratet ceremony, but has exactly the same effects. The warriors, when deeply in love, wait for their sweetheart to come out of initiation and they immediately tie the segutiet. From this moment no one can marry the girl, and if someone does, the warrior can always ask the elders to set her free; but to present his case he must have two witnesses who will swear that they saw him "tying" the girl.

In all but the fifth case *no divorce can be granted if there is even one child of the marriage.*

The only comparatively frequent case of divorce is that

¹ But not if she has already had a child.

of the husband seeking divorce because of the adultery of his wife. He is materially interested in this, as the bride-wealth he has given will be returned to him if he succeeds. The parents of the wife will of course do their best to stop this action, as they do not want to lose the cattle of the bride-wealth. This greed is very often a source of considerable hardship to their daughter.

When a wife, because of her adultery, is afraid to face her husband, she very often seeks refuge in her parents' hut. As soon as they are informed of her misdeed, they will, however, send her back with a pot of beer, and two of her brothers leading a heifer. When they arrive at the husband's village, they go about informing all his friends, more especially the men of his *ipinda*, asking them to come to his hut and soothe him, so that he may accept their presents. They then lead their sister and the heifer into the husband's *kraal*. If the husband looks on at this without turning his face away, it is a sign that he accepts their *nioet-ap-kat* (apology). In fact, he never dares to refuse it, as a man who refuses a *nioet-ap-kat*, even for the murder of his brother or father, will become a social outcast.¹

If there is no formal apology, the case comes before the usual judges,² who are assisted during the trial by people from the village of the couple's residence, as well as from that of their parents. The president of the court must always be the *Kiruogindet neo*, the High Judge of their³ "village group",⁴ as divorce is of great importance to the community. The conduct of the couple before and after marriage is explained and, if the judges decide to grant the divorce, the following ceremony is performed.

KONIYET AP KE (DIVORCE)

When divorce has been granted, the husband and his wife are sent away. The assembled elders now sit in two parallel rows, facing each other and leaving a space in the middle.

¹ *Vide* "Law". ² *Vide* "Law". ³ The couple's. ⁴ *Vide* p. 178.

The couple is then called back and, as they go through the line, they are asked if they are agreed to anoint each other with butter. This is a customary question, which is answered in the affirmative.¹ At the end of the line the wife's relatives are waiting with the butter and the husband and wife will anoint each other on the head and breast. They then shake hands and the husband greets his wife by her child's name, *kainet ap musarek* (name of porridge), adding the word *Takwenia*, which is the greeting to little girls. The wife replies *igo* (yes) *subay*, a greeting given to little boys, and addressing her husband by his *kainet ap musarek*. Both the *kainet ap musarek* and the child's greetings are strictly prohibited between the opposite sexes, and a man only uses them to persons related to him in such a way, or being so much younger than himself, that there is no possibility of his marrying them; and that is why these expressions are used here. The breaking of the taboo emphasizes how far apart the two have drifted; it is a plain indication that their association as husband and wife at present and in the future is ended.

The husband now takes two sticks, one of the *kurbaniet* and one of the *mabiyet* tree, the bark of which has been taken off, and he beats with them a round stone, reciting the following oath (*mumek*):—

Ngototun anyou ole amache chebi,
If another day I come say I want this girl,
Konyo matun kou ngoi.
to become may I some day same as this stone.

EFFECTS OF DIVORCE

When formal divorce with *mumek* (oath) has been pronounced between the two parties the family of the ex-husband and wife can marry again into each other's clan-

¹ I am told by A. Terer, the Kiruogindet neo of the Kapkiam group and the most respected judge of the Peelkut district, that even if one of them refuses to answer in the affirmative, it makes no difference.

subdivision, but advantage is seldom taken of this permission, as there is a widespread belief that this may affect the wife with barrenness. The ex-husband and wife themselves cannot marry into each other's clan-subdivision, as the husband has made *mumek* and this prohibits marriage with all members of his wife's clan-subdivision.¹

The main effect of divorce is that the *tug' ap koita* must be returned. If they are still in the father's *kraal*, the original heads of cattle, with the young they have had since, must be handed back. If they have died or been used to marry one of the wife's brothers, they must be replaced. This is the reason that makes divorce of very rare occurrence, as the wife's father or brothers will rather make a formal apology than give back what they have received. Very often the women are miserable because of this and they run away time after time, hoping that their husband will divorce them; but if their parents are mean, they will force them to go back to their husbands every time. This is why Kipsigis wives when tired of seeking refuge with their parents when their husband has ill-treated them run away to a lover, hoping that he will repay the bride-wealth and thus help them to get a legal separation. They also go to towns or to some foreign tribe and become prostitutes there.

¹ *Vide* "Prohibited degrees", pp. 110 et seq.

CHAPTER VI

THE FAMILY, PROHIBITED DEGREES, KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY

The typical Kipsigis household is composed of the husband, his wife, and children. This is not only the simplest form, but the strongest expression of family ties. Both in the village and in the larger group of relations it stands out as a strong unit, sharing the same interests and having, to a large extent, the same aims in life.

Although the Kipsigis use the classificatory system of relationship, it is understood that the appellations, ex. gr. of father and mother, used towards the father's brother and his wife, are only a matter of courtesy and that one is not expected to show towards them the same loyalty and devotion that one's parents would naturally expect. Moreover, in this larger group of relations, personal ties exist between two definite persons and, although distantly related, they will give each other much greater assistance in case of need than they would give a closer, but unlikeable relative.

FATHER, MOTHER, AND CHILD ¹

The love and tenderness shown by Kipsigis parents to their offspring is always touching. When I first came into contact with them, two epidemics—malaria and dysentery—were raging. Men, shivering with fever and not fit to stand on their legs, used to tramp for miles to come to my tent and ask for medicines and advice to cure their children.

¹ The relations of father and mother were delineated in "Marriage" and their economic activities will be described in "Economics".

The parents' solicitude is shown in every possible way and, as with children the world over, it is not always requited.

When they are still quite young, the mother is not the only one to look after them. The father takes a great pride in his children and he can often be seen outside his hut, feeding them and pushing solid porridge down their throat, when they are four or five months old ! When they grow up, he builds a singroina for them to sleep and make love in. He often makes use of this hut ; but while he is there, the children must not bring their sweethearts and are not supposed to tell stories of a licentious character. This is a general rule, which is often broken, as the father himself often exchanges jokes on sex matters with his friends and in the presence of his sons ; but his daughters are always excluded from his presence at such moments.

The habit the children have of imitating all the acts of their seniors is an essential factor in their education. As they grow up, they learn from their parents much that will be useful to them in after life. When the boys are old enough they go out hunting with their father, watch him building his hut and herding the cattle, and when they return home they copy in their games everything they have seen their father perform. By imitating the forms of speech of their elders they get to know the correct terms of address to be used towards each relative, and the father will often be seen instructing them in this matter.

The little girls are most of the time to be seen with their mother, and the education they receive in their home is much more detailed and specialized than that of the boy. Cutting wood, lighting the fire, looking after the babies, and helping their mother to cook form the best part of their duties. Cooking recipes and magic formulae to be used against their husbands are handed down in that way. I remember once, during the trial of a woman accused of witchcraft, how all the old men were called to the judgment and asked if they could remember whether the mother, grandmother,

and great-grandmother of the accused had ever been implicated in a case of witchcraft, and on their negative answer the girl was set free. Female witchcraft is definitely inherited through the mother.

The economic value of a girl is much greater than that of a boy. I used to point out to my Kipsigis friends, when they used to come swollen with pride to announce that a boy was born to their wife, that not only was a girl very valuable as a help at home and in the fields, but also that the bride-wealth given by her husband helped to marry the boys and give them a good start in life. "Yes," Arap Seuer would laugh, "I like to have many daughters, but one is proud of a warrior."

The obedience shown by the present generation to their parents is not very edifying. It is said that in generations past the father's word was law in his hut ; but then the past was the dwelling-place of everything good and virtuous. There is no doubt that the comparative proximity of European farms and the introduction of new ideals by the white man has done much to lower the esteem of the young men towards native standards of value. Whereas complete economic dependence on the father was, until lately, the rule, young men now often go to work on European farms and thus gain their own living. Unhappily they often come there into contact with unworthy specimens of foreign tribes and, when they return to their own Reserve, are prone to desecrate the sacred customs of their ancestors.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS

When the children are still very young, they have the same outlook on life and share common interests. They are usually to be seen outside the hut playing at different games and imitating the activities of their parents. One of the most common games is for them to build small huts out of sticks and leaves. The girl will bring her brother milk and porridge and light a fire on which to cook it, while the little

boy will play at being father, ordering her about and armed with a mock spear to protect their house. They also build little kraals at which they "herd" the fruit of the labotuet shrub, called *tug' ap labot*, the cattle of the labotuet. They share, like all children, the same pranks and are always to be found sticking together, shielding one another and doing their best to break down parental authority. As they grow up, the girls become very much their mother's children, looking after the babies and carrying them on their backs, helping with the cooking and performing the lighter menial tasks; while the boys go out hunting and playing at soldiers. When they are old enough to take interest in love-making, they are all seen together at their meeting-places, sitting under a tree, while some bright youngster will be boasting about his strength and other achievements. Although it is said that crude stories are not told in front of one's sister, one very often meets with that in life. The brother will be telling his sweetheart stories which cannot have any other object but to act as stimulants, while the sister will be listening with the greatest pleasure, and a general conversation will follow. The brother even boasts sometimes in her presence of his erotic exploits and of the proportion of his genitalia; and it is difficult to understand that a taboo between them should exist on such things, as they share a common singroina, sleeping with their sweethearts in each other's presence. The elders, when questioned, always object that such things did not happen in the past; but we have so often heard this phrase in our own homes that we shall do well to be very critical.

Marriage with one's sister is, of course, out of the question and any suggestion that impropriety may occur between them is dismissed as *sogorane*, something unnatural and thus monstrous; but the possibility should not be dismissed only because it does not conform to the moral ideals of the tribe. Brothers and sisters, before having sweethearts, sleep naked and close to each other in their own hut, away from any

supervision. My information and the facts I have collected on this point are not sufficiently detailed to make me decide one way or the other ; but I feel that it is something which depends a great deal on accidental circumstances. " La faim, l'occasion, l'herbe tendre et, je pense, quelque diable aussi le poussant."

Sisters by the same mother have a very definite economic value to their brothers, as the cattle of their bride-wealth is used by the brothers for paying their own tug' ap koita. Every hut has its own property and is economically independent of all the other huts of the same man. Thus the wealth of a young man depends on the number of his sisters. After his marriage he must, whenever he kills a bull or a cow, send a piece of the *chootet* (one of the hind legs) to the sister living nearest to his hut " to honour her for helping to pay his bride-wealth ". In this, as in many other cases, it will be noticed that the actual proximity of the relative's residence helps to tighten the bonds of kinship. In the case under discussion the sister, if living at a reasonable distance, will co-operate with her brother's wife. She will help her in the digging of the fields, the cutting and carrying of wood, and will look after her children and cook the food when the *kamati* (sister-in-law) is ill. She will also help her at childbirth and during the seclusion which follows it, and will expect her *kamati* to give her the same assistance when she needs it. In some clans, also, the brother is expected to give his sister a goat when she comes out of initiation ; but this custom is far from universal.

The same rules of reciprocity apply to brothers among themselves. But if a man is poor and cannot marry, he cannot expect the assistance of his brother, who will never give him more than one cow to help him pay the bride-wealth. The reason for this is that the parents of the girl, if they learn of the brother's gift, will refuse to accept the bride-wealth, fearing that the brother might ask for his cattle to be returned.

THE PATERNAL "CLASSIFICATORY PARENTS"

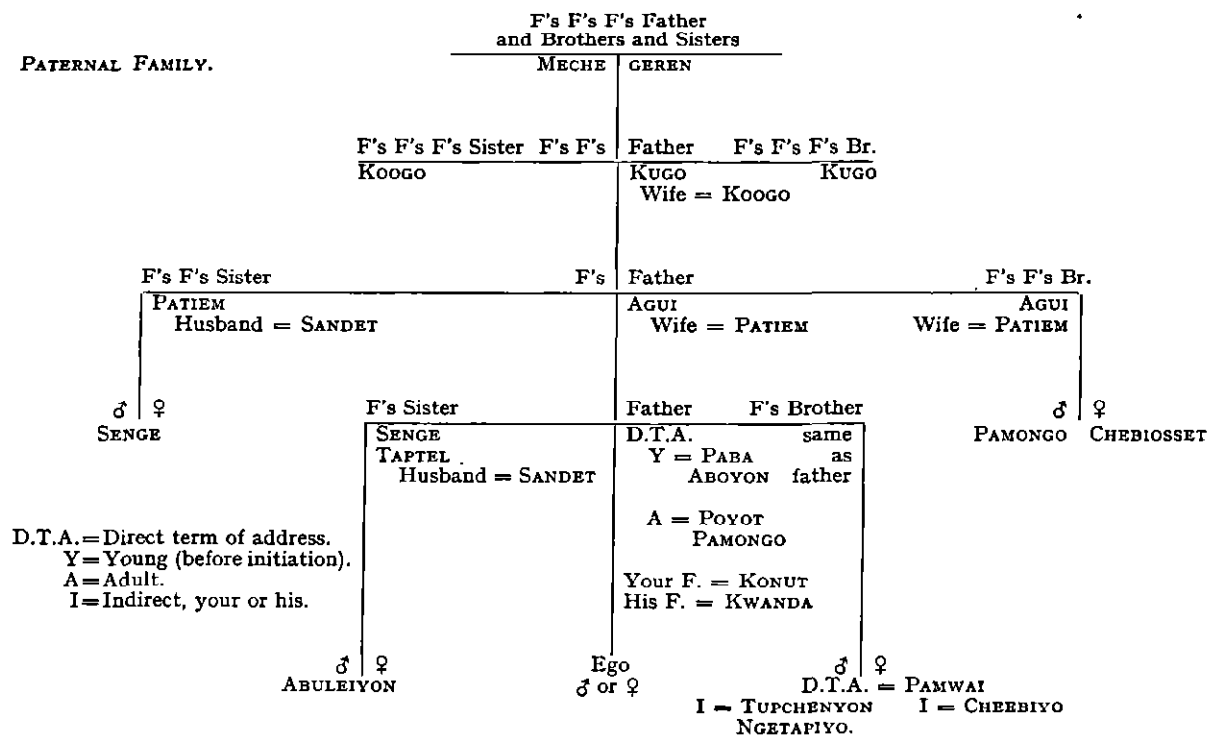
The Kipsigis system of relationship is classificatory. Thus they give to whole sets of relations the appellation of "father", "mother", "brother", and "grandfather" (*vide* Diagram I).

The Kipsigis, being a patrilocal and patrilineal tribe, pay great respect to all their paternal relations. This real or academic respect finds its expression in special forms of address uniting whole categories of people under the name of "parents". These terms are only used as a polite form of speech and are not a manifestation of a deeply ingrained feeling of awe or of love to the persons called, ex. gr., by the name of father. In this respect the Kipsigis family is very near the European one. Affection and respect towards a relative are seen to grow in direct proportion to the propinquity of his residence and to the personal kindness he shows to a man, irrespective of his title of Aboyon or of Pamwai. The real grandfather is very much loved and respected, as he makes a great fuss of the children, and so are the paternal uncles, when they live reasonably near and are in contact with the family.

The economic obligations between paternal relations are only enforced during moments of exceptional need. In everyday life the father's brothers (Kwanda = father) do not call upon their nephews (lakwani = son) to perform any work in their household or in their fields. When brothers live very close to each other, their wives help each other in their respective fields and sometimes take their daughters with them to lend a hand. But this is a general principle among friends and is not limited to close relations. The boys will also take their paternal uncle's cattle to graze, if the uncle is still a bachelor or has children who are still too young to perform this duty.

Where the solidarity of the paternal family can be seen functioning is in the case of a murder committed by one of its members. In this case compensation will have to be

PATERNAL FAMILY.



THE FAMILY

DIAGRAM I.

paid, and the responsibility for its payment is shared by all the clan-subdivision ; but in reality the onus of payment will fall on the paternal descendants of the *mechegeren*, that is on all the paternal descendants of the " true " great-great-grandfather. The *mechegeren* will also help if the harvest is bad, or if there is foot and mouth disease among the cattle of a man. As one of my informants, Arap Terer, put it, " We do not know all the children of our *mechegeren*, we only ask our relatives who are also our friends." While I was in the Kipsigis Reserve, the harvest of a man failed, and I was thus able to watch these principles at work. The man, Arap Rongo, only asked the help of those relatives living close at hand ; but the largest contribution came from his neighbours living in the same *kokwet* (village) as himself and who were in no way related to him. Beyond the narrow family circle composed of the parents, father's brothers and sisters and one's own brothers and sisters, the real economic unit of co-operation and reciprocal help is the village, and not the larger family group of *mechegeren* and *kot-ap-chi*.¹

THE MATERNAL FAMILY

The maternal family is of very secondary importance in the life of a Kipsigis, as its members belong to a different clan. The only person of outstanding importance is the mother's brother by the same mother, i.e. the " true " *mama*. The *mama*'s importance is said to be due to the fact that " he was in the same womb as the mother " and this not only gives him special powers but also makes him be under special obligations to the boy—obligations greater than those of his paternal uncles. I will only give a short list of them here, as most of them are discussed elsewhere.

(1) When the boy is going to the *Kiparbore* ² ceremony

¹ *Kot-ap-chi*, i.e. people of the same house, is the name given to members of the clan-subdivision (*vide* " Clan ").

² Or *Parparet*.

THE FAMILY

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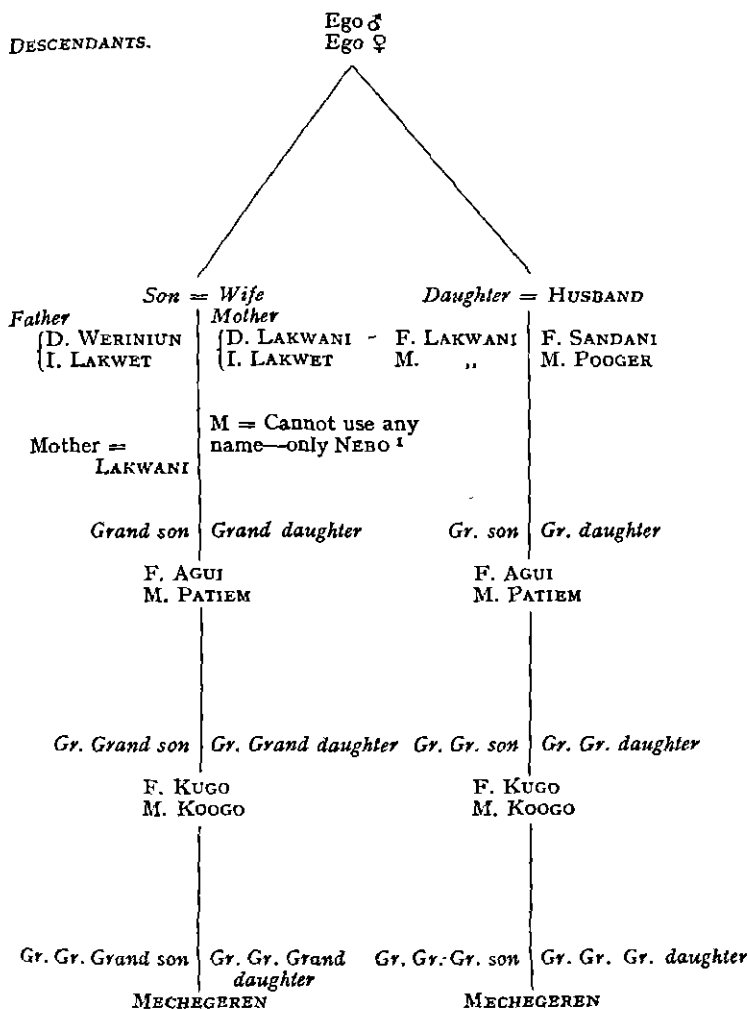


DIAGRAM II.

D = Direct term of address.
I = Indirect term of address.
F = Father speaking.
M = Mother speaking.

¹ NEBO means the "one belonging to", thus Nebo Arap Kallia, the (wife) of A. Kallia.

COLLATERALS.

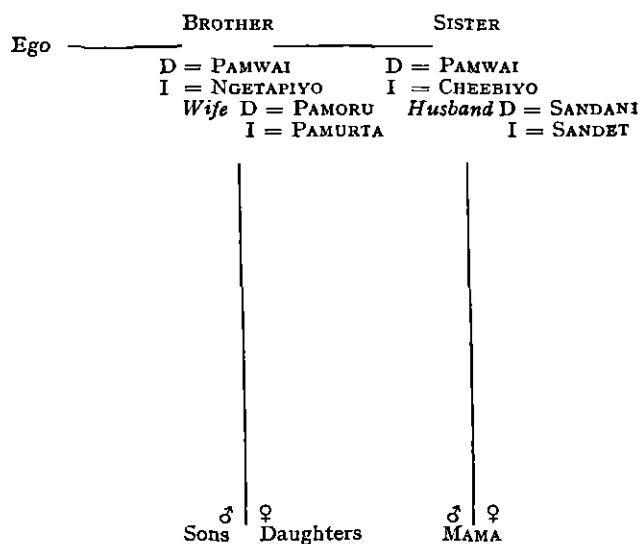


DIAGRAM II.

MATERNAL FAMILY.

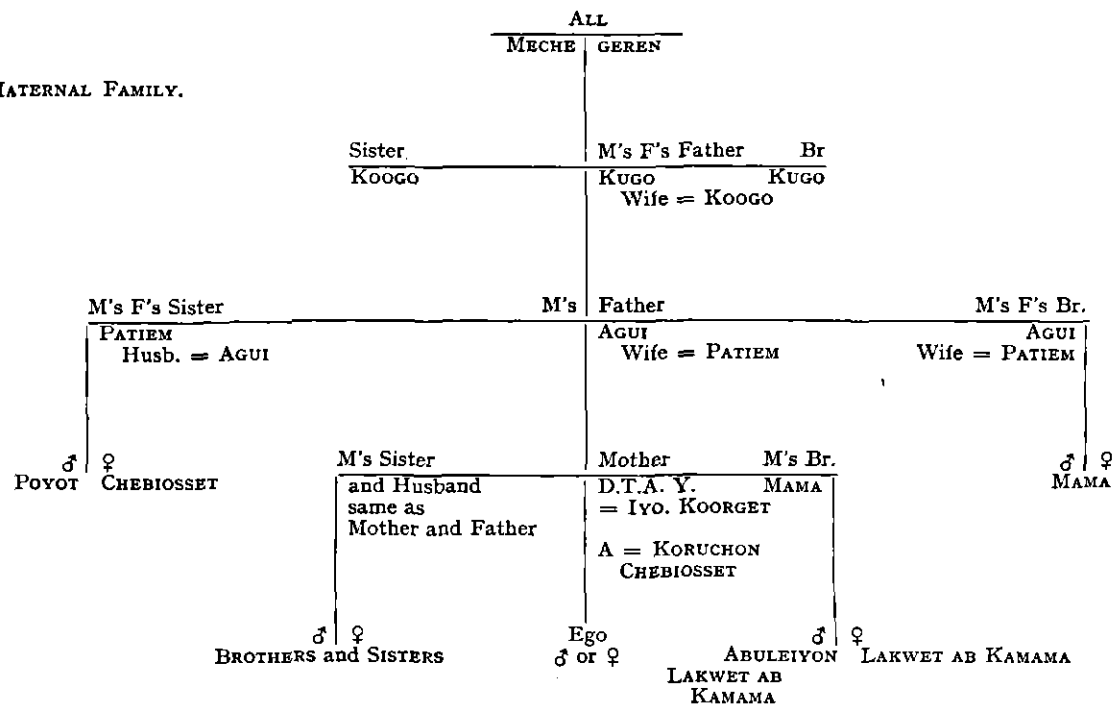


DIAGRAM III.

THE FAMILY

to have his ears pierced, his mama anoints him with butter and presents him with one goat.

(2) Before the circumcision of the boy his mama anoints him with butter and, when he comes out, presents him either with a goat or a heifer, according to his wealth.

(3) If the boy wants to get married and cannot raise the bride-wealth, the mama is asked to give a heifer. As this gift is not connected with any ceremony, and as it is considered unnatural to transfer cattle from one clan to another without payment, when the cow is given to his nephew, the mama puts down the beer, then calls one or two of his clansmen and neighbours, and officially declares before them that he intends this heifer as a gift. He then spits beer into his nephew's hands and gives him the cow.

(4) The nephew must herd his uncle's cattle if he is asked to do so.

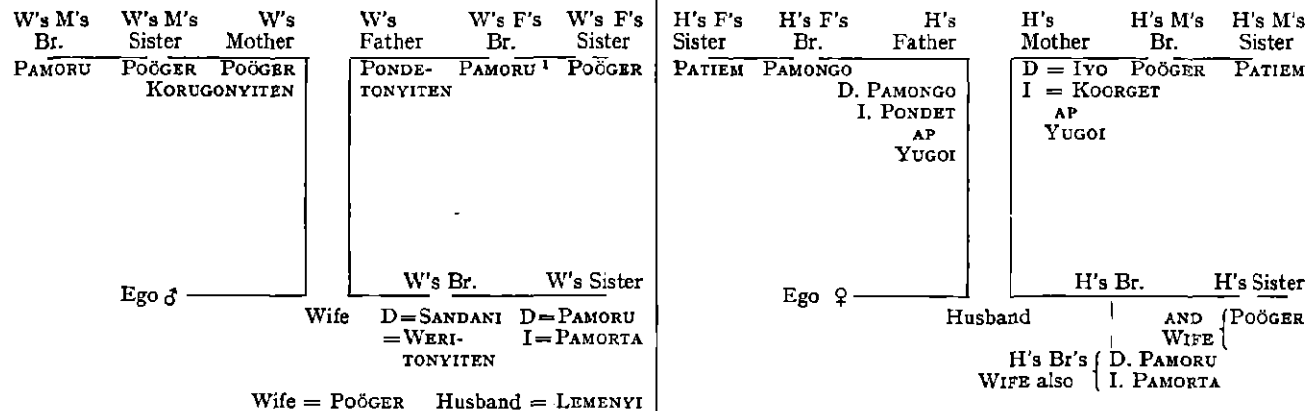
A young man stands in great fear of his maternal uncle and tries not to anger him, as his spell is said, to be very potent, and the mere mention of it has a sobering influence on him. If he shows disrespect towards his mother or to his mama, the latter will threaten him with the spell, which is only cast after extreme provocation.

When the mama wants to curse his nephew, he scratches his leg until he draws blood. He then makes the gesture of cleaning his nail and throwing the blood at his nephew, while reciting the following :—

Ngo i werit ap chebtanyun ketcheluagen
 If you child of my sister you wronged me
imumuldege imey
 You fall down like a dried log, you die
anan kobarin korot.
 or you are killed (by) disease.

There is another curse which can also be used by the paternal uncle. The uncle goes to his nephew's hut and removes the *subaret*, which is a large piece of wood used to keep the fire going during the nocturnal hours. When throwing the

RELATIONS BY MARRIAGE.



¹ May also be called PONDETONYITEN, but this title is seldom used towards him.

DIAGRAM IV.

subaret outside, the uncle first accuses his nephew of a specific misdeed and then recites the following formula :—

Inye koi subenoni kōochuret komanda anan
 You (become) like this fire-wood I have dragged outside or
kobek lagokuk ak inye igeer nyalil.
 be finished your children and you you will see trouble.
 (Disaster will overtake you.)

RELATIONS BY MARRIAGE

After the transfer of the bride-wealth by the son no specific economic obligations bind him to his *kapkotuagn*, i.e. his relations by marriage. If they live close at hand, they will give their daughter some help in the fields; but beyond that no bonds of solidarity exist between son-in-law and parents-in-law.

The only fact of some importance in their relationship are the laws of "avoidance", which must be followed whenever the two families meet. In front of one's *kapkotuagn*, and this term covers all the patrilineal relatives of the wife, one must use only the most polite forms of speech, and if a man desires to make any reference to sexual matters, he must use the widest circumlocution. When the *kapkotuagn* are entertained at one's home, they must sit at the *injjor* side of the hut, which is reserved for them. As in most primitive communities what is outwardly most striking is the mother-in-law-son-in-law avoidance. Whenever a man meets his mother-in-law, he must change his direction, so that they may not find themselves face to face. If he desires to speak to her, he must address her from some distance, and he cannot eat food cooked by her or enter her hut before the *eworga* ceremony, which is performed very late in life, when it is considered that, even if they come into closer contact, no harm will result. The exact reason for this avoidance is not very clear in the mind of a Kipsigis, but from several discussions I had with them on this matter, one point seemed to emerge with more

lucidity than any other ; and that was that, if these rules were not kept strictly and the son-in-law was tempted to have intercourse with his mother-in-law, the result of this improper behaviour would be sterility for his wife ; and the fear of barrenness, either for his cattle or for his wife, is the greatest of deterrents to a normally-minded Kipsigis.

As it will be seen from Diagram IV, the terms of address to be used by husband and wife towards their in-laws are very intricate and complicated. Special terms are used, not only by the very close relatives, but by all the members of the clan-subdivision of the two families. The father and the elders of the husband's clan-subdivision call all the members of the wife's clan-subdivision *Pamori*, and the members of the bride's clan-subdivision call them *pamori* if they are old, and *sanik* if young—usually before marriage. *Weritonyiten* is a general term used by the youngsters of the husband's clan-subdivision towards the youngsters of the wife's clan-subdivision, and they call them *sanik* (individually *sandani*).

RULES PROHIBITING MARRIAGE

(1) *Tribe*

The Kipsigis intermarry with foreign tribes if

- (a) These tribes practise male and female circumcision ;
- (b) They effect the payment of the bride-wealth in the same numeric proportions of cows and goats. This question was raised when a Wanderobo,¹ called by the Kipsigis Awkiek, wanted to marry a Kipsigis girl, but had only goats with which to pay the bride-wealth. He tried to give the girl's father goats, honey, and tobacco of the same total value as the tug' ap koita, but the girl's family objected, saying that they must have the right number of cows, so that they could be kept for the girl's brothers to marry with when they were grown up. This is because of the Kipsigis principle that the tug' ap koita are not the property of the father

¹ People of mixed stock, living in the forest.

and cannot be consumed in any single act like perishable goods such as honey and tobacco, but are to be held in trust by the father as the future bride-wealth to be paid to their kapkotuagn by his sons. Thus no fungibles can be accepted as part of the bride-wealth.

(2) *The Ipinda*

No one may marry the daughter of a man belonging to his own age-set, as he calls those children "sons" and "daughters"; but he can marry the daughters of any age-set preceding or following his own.

Women's ipinwek are not taken into consideration.

(3) "*Clan*" *Exogamy*

All the large clans¹ have many different *tiondo* (animals) and each *tiondo* is subdivided into sub-clans, all the members of which are said to be descended from a common ancestor.

Although members of all subdivisions and of all animals of a single *Oret* (clan) may use the same clan-nickname, no clan exogamy as such exists. Only the members of one subdivision, having at its head a hypothetical common ancestor, are not allowed to intermarry, but members of different subdivisions of the same animal or of different "animals" of a single *oret* can intermarry.

Ex. gr.

<i>Common Name of Clan.</i> ²	<i>Tiondo (animal).</i>	<i>Subdivisions (Kot-ap-chi).</i>
	(a) Leluot (Jackal).	f (1) Kapcheromur.
	(b) Solupchot (Cockroach).	l (2) Kabororek, etc.
Kipoiis, etc.	(c) Karaityet (Colobus Monkey).	

¹ *Vide* Clan, pp. 117-125.

² This name, called Katchaet, is a surname of the main *tiondo*, and is often used by women in songs of praise to their husbands' *tiondo* (animal). Thus the Jackal is the "thief", the "coward", etc., and the other *tiondo* use, as a rule, the surname or surnames of the main *tiondo* to describe themselves.

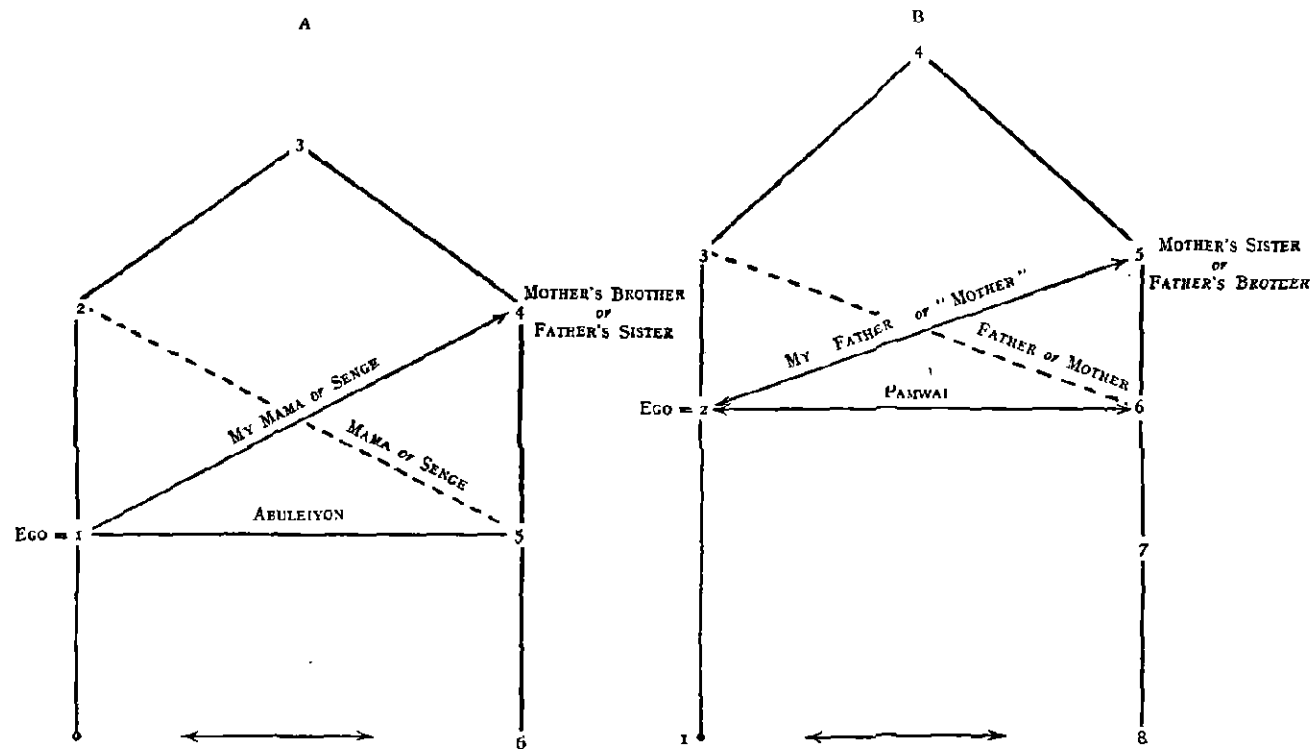


DIAGRAM V.—PROHIBITED DEGREES.

Here Leluot, Solupchot, and Karaityet can intermarry, although they are all Kipoiis ; moreover, the Kapcheromur and Kabororek subdivisions of the Leluot can also intermarry. The only prohibited intermarriage would be that of two Kapcheromur, which would be regarded as sogoranet, something unnatural, and thus incest.

(4) *Prohibited Degrees*

(a) *Collaterals*

If reference is made to the two diagrams describing the terms of address towards members of the paternal and maternal kin and also to the diagram of prohibited degrees, it will be seen that the Father's brothers' and the Mother's sisters' children are called Brothers and Sisters. In this case only the Mechegeren, who are third cousins, can intermarry ; i.e. a count of eight is established, four up from one party to the common ancestor, and four down from the common ancestor to the descendant he wishes to marry. I am mentioning this, as the Kipsigis usually count on their knuckles according to this common system.

In the case of the Father's brother,¹ the mechegeren can, of course, marry only if the kot-ap-chi are not the same, that is, if at least one of the genealogical links between themselves and the common ancestor (4 on B, Diagram V) is a woman.

If, on the other hand, the relation between 1 and 4, or 5 and 2 (Diagram V), is that of Mama or Senge, the relation between 1 and 5 is only that of Abuleiyon, and their descendants can marry, thus establishing only a count of 6 (second cousins).

Those are the rules and, although they are usually followed with great reverence, exceptional cases do arise in which people have married within the prohibited degrees. If this has been done through ignorance,² the Poyot ap Tumda

¹ Diagram V, " B."

² And the couple are not too closely related.

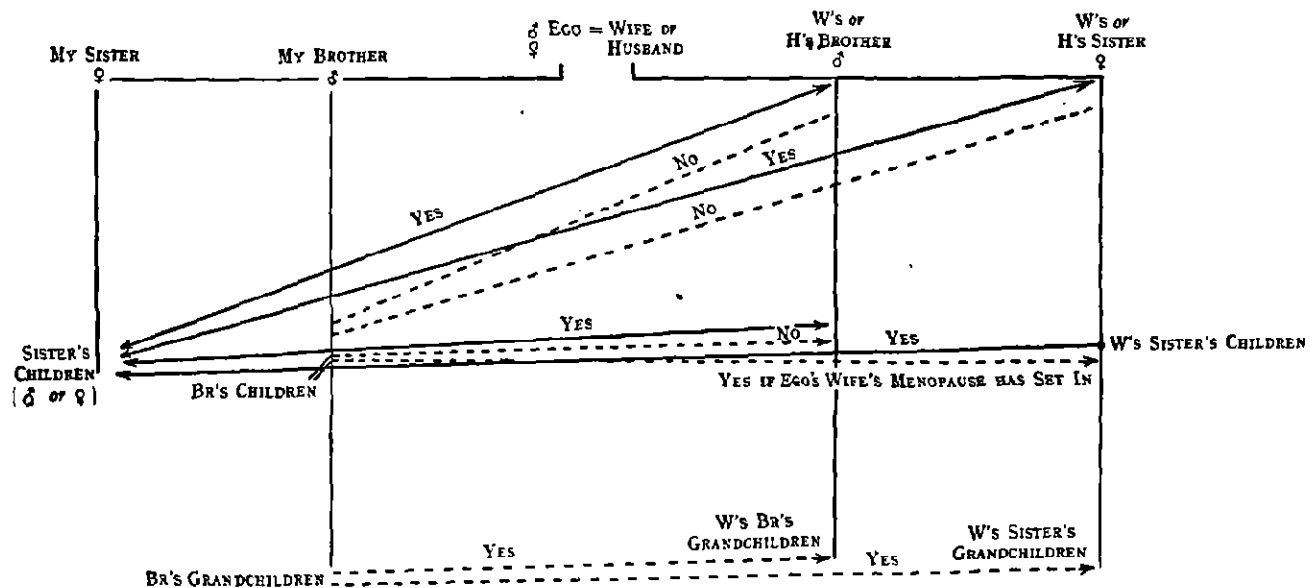


DIAGRAM VI.

is called to spit beer from his sacred Komda on to the couple, so that all uncleanness may be removed and she or, if she has had children, her descendants may not be barren, as barrenness is the punishment of incest.¹ The anathema of sogoranet can only be expiated in this way, if the couple are not "real" brothers and sisters or related in direct line.

(b) *Kapkotuagn and Sanik, relations by marriage.*

A man cannot marry twice into the same clan-subdivision, and this prohibition only ceases with his *Mechegeren*, i.e. his great-great-grandchildren. The brothers and sisters, also, cannot marry the wife's Kot-ap-chi and vice versa.

If reference is made to Diagrams VI and VII, it will be seen that the sister's children can marry anyone in my wife's (or husband's) family. That is because the sister's children belong to a clan different from that either of ego's wife (or husband).

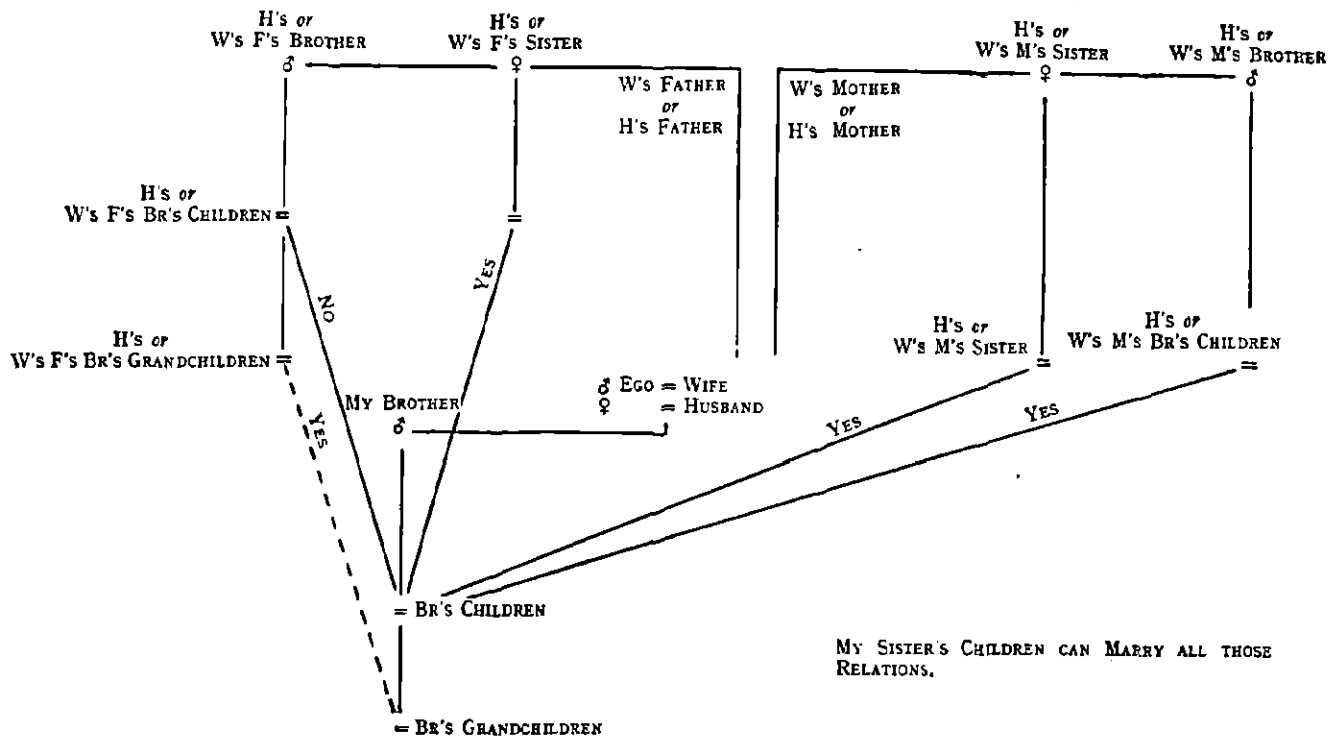
My brother's children cannot marry my wife's (or husband's) brother's children and can only marry my wife's (or husband's) sister's children, if the menopause of my wife has set in, so that she may run no risk of barrenness in the future.

My brother's children can marry the descendants of my wife's (or husband's) mother's sister or mother's brother, as they belong to a different clan from my wife, my wife's (or husband's) mother being of a different clan from my wife (or husband). But my brother's children cannot marry my wife's (or husband's) father's brother's children, but only his grandchildren. All this is shown more clearly in Diagrams VI and VII.

(5) *Mogiko-o-neke*

This is the "closing down" of two families prohibiting, for private reasons, intermarriage between their members.

¹ As I have said before, there is no single word meaning incest. Such an action is referred to as *sogoranet*, something monstrously abnormal; but this is said of anything unnatural, as, ex. gr., of a cow which licks the face of a man (in which case it is immediately put to death).



MY SISTER'S CHILDREN CAN MARRY ALL THOSE RELATIONS,

DIAGRAM VII.

(a) When the husband or wife dies soon after Ratet, or if they have passed the age of procreation and did not have a single child, only the mechegeren of those two families will be able to intermarry.

(b) The whole clan-subdivisions (i.e. the kot-ap-chi) of the murderer and of his victim.

(c) The descendants of two persons between whom mumek has been made.¹

In the first case the kot-ap-chi, and in the second the mechegeren, will not be able to intermarry until the mogiko-o-neke has been lifted. In the case of *rumisiet* (murder of a Kipsigis) the father of the suitor must send a *loynet* (bleeding arrow), on which he has spat beer, to the girl's father, thus asking him to agree to stop the mogiko-o-neke. The loynet, which is symbolic of the fertility of cattle, means here that, if it is accepted, the daughter will not be barren.

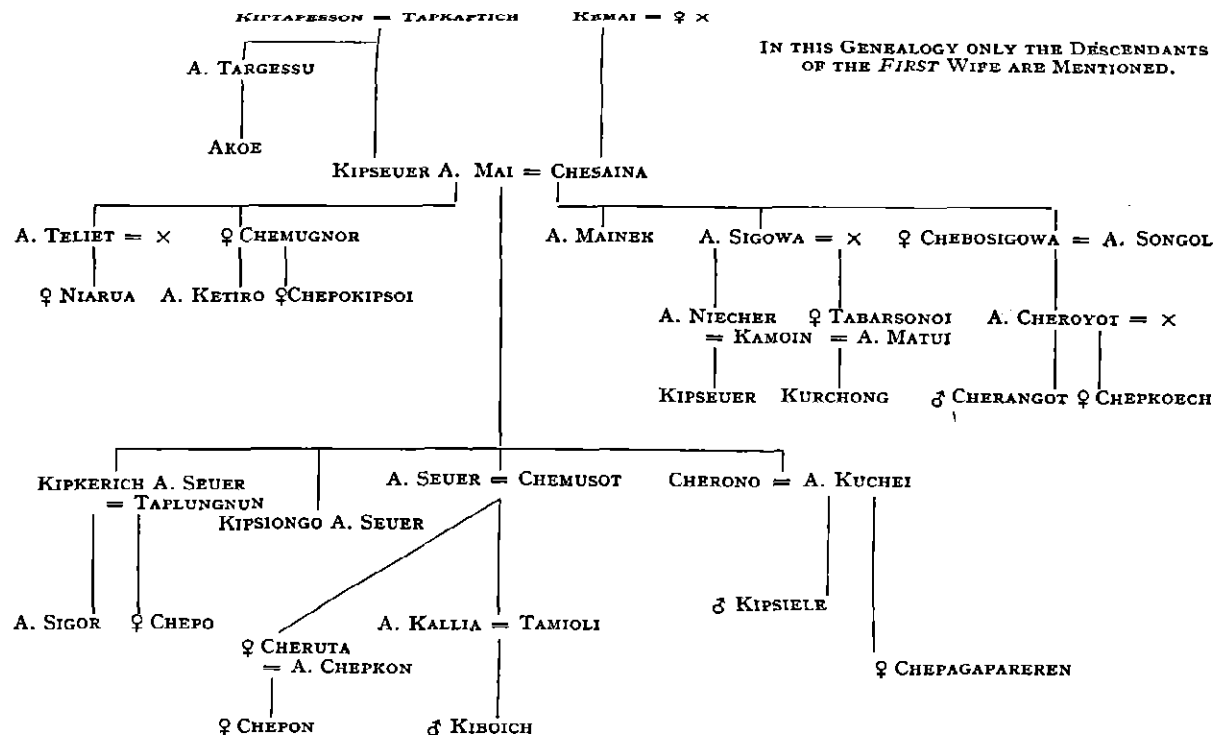
In the case of mumek members of the two families assemble at a beer party and the elders of each spit beer on all the others, thus lifting the ban.

It will be noticed that only in the case of murder have I stated that mogiko-o-neke is extended to all the kot-ap-chi. This may seem illogical, but is not so in fact, as a murder is something so exceptional that it will be heralded all over the district and the clan-subdivisions of murderer and victim will be known immediately. But mumek, normal death, and barrenness are events of only local importance.

(6) *Spiritual Kinship*

Spiritual kinship arising from contact, or assistance given during a ceremony, only binds the two persons concerned, and the prohibition of intermarriage is not extended to their next of kin. Such relationships are sanctioned by special terms of address, but these, also, are limited to the two persons bound by this spiritual kinship :—

¹ In Koniyet-ap-ke mumek is unilateral and does not bind the families of the divorced couple.



IN THIS GENEALOGY ONLY THE DESCENDANTS
OF THE FIRST WIFE ARE MENTIONED.

THE FAMILY

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DIAGRAM VIII.—GENEALOGY OF A. SEUER, POYOT AB KOKWET OF KIPKOYBON.

(a) Man and wife feeding the initiates in the menjit are called by them Pamongo and Iyo, i.e. Father and Mother.

(b) The Motirenik in all ceremonies of initiation and marriage.

(c) The two persons who "open the way" at yatet ap oret and are addressed as *pamwai*, brother or sister.

Thus all the aforesaid persons who stand in the relation of *Pamongo*, *Iyo*, *Motiryot*, and *Pamwai* cannot intermarry ; but all their relations are free to do so.

CHAPTER VII

THE CLAN¹

The positive and prohibitive rules binding together the members of one family are not limited to the persons so closely related as to avail themselves towards each other of the rich kinship terminology.

People who are said to have a common agnatic ancestor are declared to be kot-ap-chi,² i.e. "people of the same hut". The elders excel in tracing back for three or four generations the common links between the kot-ap-chi and in discovering these agnatic bonds. They go back and back, until no living memory can retain any longer the names and actions of the "glorious ancestors", and it is from this exact point that the notion of clan takes its source. People who have never seen each other, whom even the elders cannot link with any common ancestor,³ are declared to be kot-ap-chi when they belong to the same clan-subdivision. Each of these subdivisions is said to be descended from a common *pater familias*, and the name of clan illustrates this linguistically. It is called the Road (oret), ortanyin = of the same road = clansmen.

THE CLANS AND THEIR SUBDIVISIONS

The clan appellations are derived either from animal or vegetable life, or from atmospheric phenomena. Asista,

¹ It is called clan for want of a more appropriate term. As it will be seen, it is a non-exogamous unit.

² Kot = hut, ap = of, chi = people, i.e. people of the same hut.

³ This is the reason for which they are not called "lineages" but "clan-subdivisions", or, by their Kipsigis appellation, kot-ap-chi. The genealogy on p. 115 (Diagram VIII), incomplete as it is, is the longest I have collected.

the Sun-clan, exceptionally takes its name from a celestial body. Large clans are subdivided into other animals or plants, and each of these sections may have its own subdivision. Thus, ex. gr. :—

<i>Tiondo</i> (animal)	<i>Subdivisions</i>	<i>Katchaet</i> ¹
(Totem).	(The kot-ap-chi). ²	(Nickname for whole clan).
(a) Leluot (jackal).	{(a) Kapcheromur	Kipois.
(b) Solupchot (cockroach).	{(b) Kabororek, etc.	Mendek, etc.
(c) Karaityet (colobus monkey).		

Here, perhaps, the Kipsigis's own explanation of how these subdivisions came into being would help us to understand them. In the beginning, they say, there were very few clans and, as the membership of each clan was growing more numerous, it was becoming increasingly difficult to prevent clan endogamy. It was thus decided that, when each Ipinda of every clan came out of initiation, it would adopt a different totem. This allowed the members of those two totems to intermarry,³ but did not prevent them from presenting to strangers a united front, as though the schism had never taken place. This was illustrated by Kiprongo in the following phrase: "The Leluot clan is like a big tree, the Solupchot and Karaityet are its branches."

If this has really been a conscious process, there must have existed, I think, more than one reason for multiplying the number of totems of each clan and for subdividing the members of each totem into different sections. The smaller

¹ It is perhaps a significant fact that for the clans with numerous tiondo there is, apart from the Katchaet, no name which would describe the clan as a whole.

² Thus the Kapcheromur, Kabororek, etc., constitute exogamous groups each having the jackal as its tiondo (animal, totem). People, ex. gr., of the Karaityet (colobus monkey) who, as far as I could ascertain, have no subdivision would also constitute exogamous groups. Both Solupchot and Karaityet when asked about their clan may say "long ears" or "coward" or give some other nickname belonging to the jackal, as this last is the tiondo of their oret (clan) with the greater membership and is thus better known.

³ Provided they did not fall within the prohibited degrees of relationship.

group composing the clan must have presented a greater cohesion, and the collective responsibility for murder have been more easily enforced. Now the numerically strongest totems were, in their turn, subdivided into sections ; but this schism was not carried out on the same principles. It is said that some wealthy and powerful *patres familiae*, with an enormous number of wives and children, created their own subdivision, since they were so very numerous as to make it desirable for themselves and the others to be distinguished from the rest of the clan. These explanations, however interesting, cannot always be accepted at their face value.

The most significant change introduced by the subdivision of the clans was that members of one totem not only ceased to be the *kot-ap-chi*, i.e. the kinsmen, of the other totems of the same clan, but even in one single totem each subdivision drew apart from the others, to the extent of denying them the title of close kinsman. Thus to-day a Kapcheromur Jackal will consider a Jackal of the Kabororek section as an Ortanyit, i.e. "a man of the same road", but not as a *kot-ap-chi*, i.e. a man of the same family. I think that this is so, not only because of the fact that the Kapcheromur are more closely related to each other than they are to the Kabororek, but because there is such a mysterious attraction in the unity of name as to create a myth.

RELATION OF CLANSMEN TO THEIR TOTEM AND OF THE SUBDIVISION TO ITS ANCESTOR

The totem of the clan is considered by the clansman much more as a symbol round which to rally, than as a divinity to be worshipped.

A man avoids killing his totem animal ; but if he wants to do so, he first excommunicates it by the *chubisiet* spell,¹ so that the animal is not his *ortanyit* any longer. But if the

¹ *Vide* " War and Hunting ".

clansman does not stand on a footing of inferiority to his totem, the totem is supposed to belong to his clan, so that he can wield a certain influence over it. Thus in a leopard hunt, when the bush has been cleared and the dangerous moment of spearing the leopard has come, a man of the Leopard Clan stands out and curses it, so that the leopard may lose its strength and be unable to do any harm. During this ceremony he first recalls all the misdeeds of the leopard, such as stealing of goats and killing of people, and throws a leaf at it, so as to indicate that from this moment the animal does not belong to his clan any longer. This ceremony of *chubisiet*¹ is the exact counterpart of the curse of the eldest brother, expelling a youngster from his family and clan.²

This influence wielded over the totem is also apparent when members of the Rain clan, by a special ceremony, ask the clouds to burst. It will be noticed that, on the list of clans, the three different totems, Lightning, Rain, and Soldier Ant, form one clan. The Soldier Ant clan is said to have chosen these secondary totems, as "the lightning forces the rain to come down, and the rain invites the soldier ants to emerge from their holes".

Like an ordinary *ortanyit* the "tiondo" is supposed to be friendly towards all the members of his clan and not to harm them under any circumstances. Thus the *mooset* (baboon) will abstain from hurting the children of his clan, contrary to his alleged practice of killing the children of men, because of his feud with a *Kipsigis* woman.³ The bees do not sting the *Segemiat* clansman when he gathers their honey, and the jackal does not steal the maize of the *Kipoiis*. In the case of a composite clan all the "tiondo" which are incorporated in it (ex. gr., Golden Crested Crane and Buffalo) are the *ortanyit* of both Crane and Buffalo men, as they form a single clan, answering to the nickname of *Kabarit*.

¹ Throwing a spell.

² *Vide* "Law", *Imengun*.

³ *Vide* Appendix, "Myths, Stories and Songs."

The sections do not worship their ancestor and do not derive any strength from the fact that they are related to him. In the exceptional cases where some of his "faits d'armes" are remembered, they are related by the elders to the younger generation, who always follow their adventures with evident satisfaction; but, as often as not, it is not this original ancestor who is thus glorified, but a member of one's ipinda or the old namesake.¹

ADVANTAGES AND OBLIGATIONS RESULTING FROM MEMBERSHIP OF THE CLAN

These will be studied later under different headings.² The clan has no internal administration whatsoever, no leader at its head, and no magician attached to it. Membership of a clan is not restricted to a definite geographical area. The ortanyit of one tiondo are scattered over the length and breadth of the Kipsigis Reserve. There is not a trace of the clan as a geographical unit, if it ever existed under that shape. The obligations of agnatic kinship can be summarized as follows: The kot-ap-chi, ex. gr. the Kapcheromur, will have to help any Kapcheromur, if he stands in need of their services. They will provide him free with grain, if his fields have been destroyed, or if his hut has been struck by lightning and burned. If he has to pay compensation for a murder, or for any anti-social crime he has committed, and he does not have the necessary number of cattle, his kot-ap-chi will be asked to subscribe: and they cannot refuse to do so according to their means, as they are jointly responsible for their criminal member and their property can be seized and only returned after deduction of the fine.³ The other section of the Leluot clan, as also the Solupchot and the Karaityet, are not asked to help. They are only the ortanyit, and not the kot-ap-chi, of the kapcheromur. On the other hand, if

¹ The old brave who gave the milk and on whose actions is based the salanyat of the child. (*Vide* Childbirth and Names in "Marriage".)

² Economics, Law, Murder, Inheritance.

³ *Vide* "Law".

a kapcheromur kills a kabororek, or a Solupchot kills a Karaityet,¹ he will not have to pay compensation for that murder, as it is from his *own* clan that he has taken a life away. Also, if a Kapcheromur Jackal kills, let us say, a man of the Leopard Clan, leopard clansmen can seize, not only the cattle of *any* section of the Jackal tiondo, but also those of the Cockroach and Colobus Monkey; as the cattle of all the sections and of all the *tiondo* of the Kipoiis clan have the same "Clan mark" on their ears. This illustrates the principle that a clan is internally divided, but is considered as an indivisible unit by all the clans outside it.

For purposes of marriage the kot-ap-chi section is the exogamic unit. Tiondo, and sections of one tiondo, of the same clan can intermarry, but there is no intermarriage between the kot-ap-chi.²

WOMEN AND CLANS

Girls follow the clan of their husbands. They compose different *salanik* or songs of praise to the totems of their clan, which they sing on festive occasions. From those songs are derived the nicknames (*katchaet*) by which a clan is generally known. Thus the elephants are known as the "big ears" or the "huge animal", the bees as the "stinging ones", the lions as the "powerful and cruel", the jackals as the "long ears", etc. The *katchaet* is the only name of the clan used in conversation, the actual name of the tiondo being seldom used, although there is no taboo about it. The nickname of the principal totem is the one used to describe the clansmen of the secondary totems. Thus, if you ask a buffalo, "What is your clan?" he may answer, "Kabarit," the Crested one, referring you to the main totem of his clan, the Golden Crested Crane.

¹ I.e. members of two different subdivisions of the same tiondo, or of two different tiondo of the same oret.

² *Vide* "Family".

Confusions thus easily arise, and it takes a long time to find out about the internal organization of the clan. Nowadays the clan, as such, is an institution of very secondary importance and is outstanding only in questions of marriage, so as to prevent section endogamy. A man has very seldom, if ever, to ask the help of an unknown kot-ap-chi as such. He finds it much more natural to go to a close relative, or to somebody with whom he has social and economic intercourse every day—usually a friend living in the same kokwet as himself. Since the Kipsigis have become a semi-agricultural tribe with a more or less fixed residence, institutions such as the Ipinda or the Clan, which might have been of great importance in their wandering past, have now been relegated to the second rank. The economic unit, "kokwet," is nowadays of paramount importance in all the major problems of daily life.

LIST OF CLANS

<i>Tiondo</i> (animal)	<i>Kot-ap-chi</i> (Clan subdivision. Minor Tiondo have no subdivisions and all their members are kot-ap-chi.) ¹	<i>Katchaet</i> (also called <i>Salanyat</i>) (Nicknames and names of praise by which the oret is known.) ²
(a) LELUOT (Jackal)	(1) Kapcheromur. (2) Kabororek. (3) Kapsegit. (4) Kageposson.	Kipoiis. Mendek. Kerus. Tulek.
(b) SOLUPCHOT (Cock- roach).		
(c) KARAITYET (Colobus monkey)	None.	Kipkisuyayek.
NIETUNDO (Lion)	(1) Kagepuret. (2) Kapterugut. (3) Kagiptuyek. (4) Kagipsegon.	Talai. Kaabrosse.

¹ Tiondo, to which I assign only one subdivision, may have others unknown to me.

² The nickname of any tiondo, but mainly of the chief one, can be used to describe the Oret. Thus the buffalo can say that they "have crests" from the nickname of the main tiondo, the Golden Crested Crane. There is also the danger that the Katchaet may be taken as the name of a kot-ap-chi subdivision.

THE CLAN

<i>Tiondo</i>	<i>Kot-ap-chi</i>	<i>Katchaet</i>
(a) PELYOT (Elephant)	(1) Kipkoitim. (2) Kapkitolil. (3) Kaamaraba. (4) Kaamarassa.	Kiramget. Massiamoi. Mouitit.
(b) MOROROGET (Frog)		Kutchue.
CHEPTIRGISHET (Duiker)	(1) Kagipsoek. (2) Kaponguek. (3) Kapcheruget. (4) Kagemuta. (5) Kapchessop. (6) Kapchelimbochet.	Kipamouyek.
SEGEMIAT (Bee)	Kipkenda.	Moimi.
(a) CHEEPLANGET (Leopard).	(1) Kaapchebor. (2) Kaagemassie. (3) Kaapsegoi.	Kipleegenek. Kaapyoubé.
(b) CHESIRERET (Hawk).		
(a) MOOSET (Black Baboon)	(1) Kaapiegoi. (2) Kapkomossa. (3) Kobobek.	Kipyegen.
(b) BUGENEREK (White Mushroom).		
CHERERET (Black- mouthed Baboon).	None.	Kiptapke.
TISIET (Blue Monkey)	Kapcheroige.	?
(a) KONGONYOT (Golden Crested Crane).	(1) Kapchamagonde. (2) Kapsutayek. (3) Kapchepkesek.	Segetcha. Kabarit.
(b) SOET (Buffalo)		Moi.
(a) BIRECHIK (Soldier Ants)		Toiyon.
(b) ILET (Lightning)	?	Kaapmorisso.
(c) ROETA (Rain)		
KIMAGETIET (Hyena)	Kapkomosi.	Korabor. Kamuurbet. Leelkemoi.
TORAET (Bush Pig)	Koobil.	Paalekut.
ASISTA (Sun)	Kaaptikpabok.	Kibassisso.

This list is not complete. There are some very small clans, Zebra,¹ Reed Buck,² etc., whose members are said

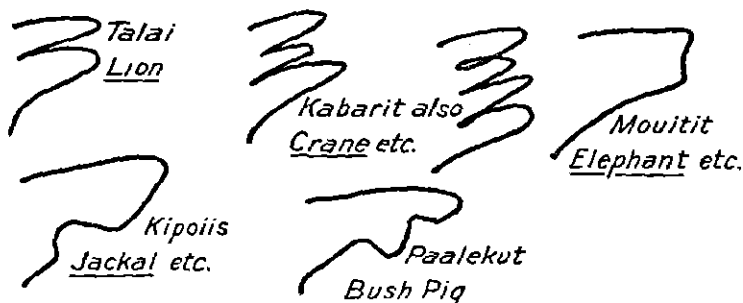
¹ Oioitigo.

² Irugutet.

to live to the south of the Nyangoris River in Sotik and with which I have not come into contact. From my personal statistics I would say with some accuracy that the above list of tiondo comprises over 90 per cent of the Kipsigis oret,¹ but the list of kot-ap-chi cannot possibly be complete.

CLAN MARKS ON THE EARS OF CATTLE

Every important clan has a mark made by cutting a design on the ears of its cattle. It is said that this mark originated with the Kipsigis raids on their neighbours. As soon as the enemy was routed and the cattle captured, each clansman hurried to put on his particular spoils the mark of his clan. This may have an element of truth, as is the case with all stories of origins related by the natives. This mark must also have served a purpose in a case of intertribal murder, when the clansmen of the murdered party



seized the cattle of the murderer's clan. Nowadays it has no real value, and a great many Kipsigis of the younger generation have stopped marking their cattle.

Although I must have seen over a thousand head of cattle during my stay, I was only able to collect the above marks. The mistoet (herdsmen) were agreed in saying that only the very large clans mark their cattle nowadays.

¹ Some clans have some distinctive peculiarity in the way they conduct their marriage ceremonies or bury their dead. These are of very secondary importance.

CHAPTER VIII

ORGANIZATION OF ECONOMIC LIFE

The sight which first meets the eye of one overlooking a Kipsigis valley may be considered picturesque by the artist, but is a scene of desolation to the prospective anthropologist. Miles and miles of shrub or grass, then a dark patch—a field—and two brown spots—a hut with its granary and, sometimes, a kraal ; then *more bush*, and another sign of human habitation 300 or 400 yards away. To look here for a village community, a co-operative system of economic organization, and a centralized authority appears, at the outset, to be heading towards certain failure. Nevertheless, not only do these systems exist, but they are functioning with commendable smoothness and efficiency.

THE KOKWET ¹

Shortly after establishing contact with my Kipsigis, I realized that, if I was to discover anything about their organization, I should have to establish a permanent base in one of their districts. Thus, by putting up my tent in Kipkoybon, where I stayed for nine months, mixing with the people and taking part in the daily routine of their life, it soon became apparent that, although no artificial boundaries exist between the open spaces, certain individuals were singled out to perform, in preference to others who lived equally near, certain duties in the fields and in the ceremonial of daily life. All those people with their huts and fields are

¹ The political organization of the kokwet is described under "Civil Authority".

members of one economic unit called *Kokwet*. *Kok* means the space outside one's hut, also the place where the cows are milked and also the meeting-place of the elders. The *kokwet* is composed of many *kok* put together; it is a village community. To the passing observer nothing distinguishes one *kokwet* from its neighbour; but the inhabitants will tell you that a tree, a river, or a field mark the limits of one *kokwet* and the beginning of the next. The great function of the *kokwet* is the co-operation of its members in agricultural work, and, for this purpose, it has at its head a *Kiptayat ab Kokwet*, a "Chief of the *Kokwet*", who gives permission for "beers" at which workers may be enlisted, and thus is the regulator of economic activities. A number of *kokotinwek* grouped together form a social unit with a Civil, a Military, and a Religious authority at its head. These, as well as some other points, will emerge from a discussion of the forms of economic activity and of the social organization of the tribe.

(a) *Agriculture*

The Kipsigis are not, and for a long time have ceased to be a purely pastoral tribe. In one of their myths¹ they say that when there was famine in the land and their cattle were fast dying out, some women discovered eleusine grain growing in elephant dung. They tasted it, found it was sweet, and sowed the remaining grain. "From that day," say the Kipsigis, "we have become a stronger and a better people than any of our neighbours." This, however, is not the opinion of the Masai, who consider that it was disgraceful for a pastoral tribe to take to agriculture and dig the soil. In one of the songs, which must have been composed by a Kipsigis diehard, the Masai are reported to say that it is high time they raided the Kipsigis and took all their cattle away:—

¹ *Vide* in Appendix (Myths).

128 ORGANIZATION OF ECONOMIC LIFE

Amun perbor Kipsigis kigolejn ngwojn
 Because foolish (the) Kipsigis they have dug the earth
 ak koweck suswek ab tuga
 and they have turned upside down the grass of the cattle (so)
 kimache
 we want
 keget tuga koba kwaget en olimii suswek.
 to drive (their) cattle to go graze where there is grass.

The first cereal to be grown by the Kipsigis was *peek* (eleusine grass) ; they then adopted the *mosongik* (millet), which has lately been discarded for maize, introduced here by the administration.¹

THE FUNCTION OF AGRICULTURE

The aims of Kipsigis agriculture are manifold: (a) to provide the household with a sufficient quantity of solid food, (b) to form a reserve of maize and peek for giving food and beer to one's guests during ceremonial occasions, (c) to store grain for trading purposes.

The purpose served by each field influences its size, the cereals grown upon it, and, of course, the working team responsible for its cultivation.

It will be seen from the attached map of Kipkoybon and Chesumot, two *temenik*, i.e. "branches" of the same

¹ The Kipsigis for a long time refused to plant maize and it is interesting to quote the reasons they imagined for disapproving of its introduction:—

(a) A few Kipsigis working on the road were shown by the Kavirondo how fine and white the maize flour was and, when they saw a heap of lime, they thought it was maize, cooked it, and died shortly after eating it.

(b) They would not eat maize and drink milk on the same days, as they said that the teats of their cows would become hard like maize grain.

(c) When they first saw the corn and took off its leaves, they threw it away in fear, as a great witch-doctor declared that the grains were the teeth of their deceased ancestors.

(d) At last they decided to grow it experimentally; but they were so impressed with the rapidity with which it germinated that they cleaned each grain of its "male part", so that the maize should not grow in their stomach and emerge from their skull.

(e) A more practical reason was that they did not know how to cook it. When peek flour is cooked and ready to eat, it is of a golden brown colour. They tried to do the same with maize flour, with the result that they burned it.



A HUT WITH ITS GRANARY (left forefront), THE MABWAI (centre), AND THE KABUNGUT (fenced)

PLATE XIV.



THE TWO WIVES (facing the camera), THE SISTER-IN-LAW AND THE DAUGHTER-IN-LAW OF ARAP SEUER DIGGING THE IMBARET A MOSSOP PRIOR TO SOWING ELEUSINE GRAIN



HARVESTING

kokwet, that every hut is surrounded by a small individual garden, the kabungut.

(a) *The Kabungut* is a small vegetable garden, cultivated exclusively by the mother and her daughters. No man ever has anything to do with it. In this garden are grown vegetables, such as *ysaygek*, *ketitchek*, and *borotchek*,¹ also the calabash from which vessels to hold liquids are made. The vegetables of the kabungut are cooked with blood or meat; to eat them alone is a sign of extreme poverty. The huts which have the largest kabungut are those of old widows, as the vegetables require very little digging and attention, so that one person can look after them himself, without having to give beer to the rest of the community to come to dig and harvest, as in the case of peek and maize.

(b) *Imbaret a' mossop (Field of the house)*

The produce of this field constitutes the most stable factor in Kipsigis agricultural economics.

The imbaret a' mossop is an entirely hand-dug field in which is grown peek, partly mixed with maize. Every separate hut, and thus each of a man's wives, must have her own imbaret a' mossop.

The work in this field is done by the wife with the assistance of resident relatives, and even of her husband in such things as sowing or erecting a fence. Beer is also given for the people of the kokwet to come and help in the digging, weeding, harvesting, etc. The produce of the imbaret a' mossop is stored in the *tabot* (granary) on the second storey of the hut over the sleeping quarters. The smoke emanating from the fireplace thus blights the grain and renders it useless for trading.

Over the grain stored in the hut the husband has no authority. He cannot take some of it to give beer to his

¹ I am not in a position to give the English scientific name of these vegetables.

friends, or to feed his sweethearts. It has one purpose, to feed the household, and from this purpose no member of the family can divert it. Every hut inhabited by a man's wife and children is, as the result of this rule, independent of the other households of the polygynous husband.

Events interesting members of one hut, such as the going of one of its children to initiation or the celebration of a birth, will lead to the consumption of part of these commodities in a ceremonial beer and feast ; but it must be an occasion regulated and enforced by social custom and not a party for private merry-making.

(c) *Imbaret ab soi*—*Kapande*

This, in contradistinction to the *imbaret a' mossop*, is the field over which the husband has complete authority. Before the introduction of maize the *imbaret ab soi* was sown with peek or millet, but nowadays, as will be seen from the map of Kipkoybon, maize preponderates. The term *imbaret ab soi* is only used for fields of peek, and the term *kapande* has been adopted by the Kipsigis to designate the husband's maize fields.

The crop of these fields may be used by the man to entertain his friends, but mainly for trading with the Indian shopkeepers. It is kept in separate storéhouses built near the hut, so as not to mix it with the grain of the *imbaret a' mossop* and also for keeping it away from the smoke of the hearth, which would have blighted it and rendered it worthless for trading.

All the work in the *imbaret ab soi* and *kapande* is done by the owner and by paid helpers. His wife and daughters are not asked to help him,¹ as their energies are devoted to the family plot. Even when a man wants to give a "beer" to his *kokwet*, so that they may come and help him in his

¹ On the *kapande* they help the man to harvest and, more rarely, to weed. These are extremely simple jobs on a maize field ; but not so in the fields of peek.

work, the grain he uses must belong to him and have been grown on a kapande or "soi". If he is starting a field of his own for the first time, his household will provide him with *telanik* from the imbaret a' mossop, so that he may give a beer. The *telanik* are grains of peek which are so hard that they cannot be easily pounded.¹

The necessity of the imbaret ab soi and of the kapande make themselves felt when we know that a man cannot dispose of the crop of the imbaret a' mossop. He must pay his poll-tax, buy spears, cloth, and cattle. The only way to do this is to trade his personal crop, if he does not want to sell his cattle—a solution contemplated by a Kipsigis only in the last extremity.

Maize for all these reasons is by far the best medium of exchange. It is easy to cultivate, since there is no grass to cut and burn and no hand-digging,² all tasks done by women. A plough is used, thus facilitating expansive cultivation and, since the Indian shops and the European farms have been founded, there is a ready market for maize flour, as it is used to feed native labour. The Kapande is thus the ideal imbaret ab soi, and this has come to be understood by most Kipsigis. If reference is made to the map of Kipkoybon, it will be noticed that, out of about thirty-five imbaret ab soi, there are only three old-fashioned hand-dug eleusine grain fields, one small imbaret ab soi where tobacco is grown and one belonging to Arap Kallia, where he has planted onions.³ The others are kapande, i.e. ploughed maize fields.

AGRICULTURAL TECHNIQUE

(a) *The Cultivation of Peek*

Peek is the most ancient of Kipsigis cereals and its cultivation has influenced, and been interwoven with, native

¹ And thus are useless for food.

² The Kipsigis always say that peek and millet (*mosongik*) will never grow on ploughed land.

³ Unique exception in Kipkoybon.

custom to such an extent that the regulations concerning work on the fields have been embodied in a corpus of ceremonial, myth, and etiquette.

The Kipsigis calendar is composed of twelve months :—

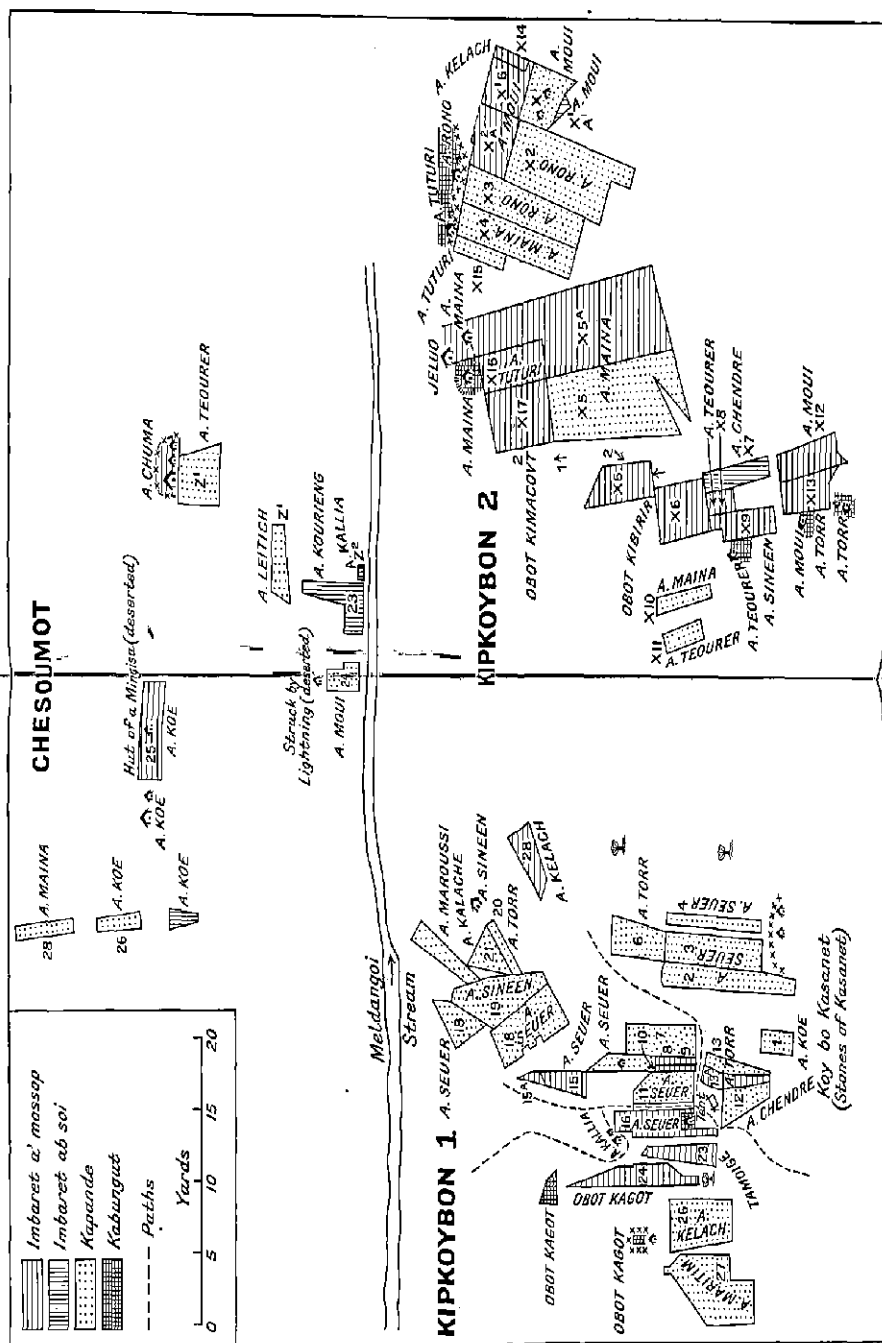
Mulgul	roughly equivalent at present in Peelkut to	January.
Ngotiolo	" " " " " "	" February.
Kiptamo	" " " " " "	" March.
Tuatkut	" " " " " "	" April.
Mamut	" " " " " "	" May.
Page	" " " " " "	" June.
Ngeyiet	" " " " " "	" July.
Robtui	" " " " " "	" August.
Buret	" " " " " "	" September.
Epeso	" " " " " "	" October.
Kipsunde		
netai	" " " " " "	" November.
(the first).		
Kipsunde nebolet or nebo oyieng	" " " "	" December.
(the second).		

The month is a lunar one, but the very old men who watch the phases of the moon are said to be capable of distinguishing its orb one day before and one day after normal people, thus making a 30-day month.

(1) During Kipsunde netai begins the *marking of the boundaries* of the fields each man is going to dig. There is no ceremonial beginning of work. In the kokotinwek where it is the custom to fence in common a piece of land and divide the plots among themselves, they usually meet at the hut of the Kiptayat ab Kokwet, or at a beer, and discuss the necessity of beginning work. The custom of fencing common fields is only upheld in districts where the number of goats kept constitutes a menace to any form of agricultural activity.

The choice of a suitable piece of land for cultivation is left to the individual and does not constitute a very great problem, as there are very few restrictions prohibiting the use of certain plots, good land being available in unlimited quantities.

(a) There are at first natural restrictions, such as the rule that once a field of *peek* has been cultivated, it must be allowed to lie fallow for at least two years after ; or that



stretches of ground near the river are always damp, so that peck rots there.

(b) The expectant labourer must take into consideration that the favourite pasture lands of the kokwet must not be tampered with. There is no hard and fast rule about this ; but if one breaks this tacit understanding, he will become very unpopular, and nobody will help him to cultivate his field.

(c) Access to the main paths of the kokwet must be left unhindered. Thus, on the map, maize field No. 4, belonging to Arap Seuer, has been cultivated for ten years, and he has not been able to connect it with field 3, as there is a path reserved for cattle in the middle.

(d) When a man wants to till the land in any kokwet but his own, he should consult with the Kiptayat ab Kokwet, or with the owner of the neighbouring plot to the one he intends to cultivate.

All these are only minor restrictions. The general rule is that a man can cultivate any land ¹ in his own, or in a foreign kokwet, if there is no prior claim to it. In his own interest a man usually chooses a piece of ground near his own hut or that of a relative ; but they often cultivate strips very far from their own domicile, so that their crops may mature at different periods of the year and provide them permanently with food.

Mararet, or marking the boundaries of the strip of land one intends to cultivate, is done by digging at intervals a line round it. This is a piece of work done by both men and women. The boundary (kiwotet) is marked, so that none may encroach upon what is from now on considered as the property of a man ; but its protection is not enforced by any form of magic, as among most agricultural people.

(2) The marking is followed by *digging* (temisyo). This is mainly the work of women and is done with hoes of European make (*vide* pl. xiv). In this work, as in most

¹ *Vide* also " Law of Property ".

of the heavy work in the field, all the paternal and maternal female relatives of the man and of his wife who are living in the same kokwet, or at a short distance, are asked to help. If the imbaret to be dug is of normal proportions, the kokwet will also be asked to help. This is achieved by giving notice to the Kiptayat ab Kokwet that a beer will be given on a certain date, and asking if this day has not been reserved by anybody else. A beer ¹ is then put outside the hut, to which members of the kokwet come to drink and send on the desired day their wife to help in the digging. Large lumps of earth are cut during digging; they are folded with the turf inside and left round the imbaret. These operations continue well into Ngotiole (February).*

(3) Gradually, as the digging goes on, the turf is opened and dried in the sun. Small piles of it are then made, set on fire, and left to burn slowly until they are reduced to ashes. This is called *belso* and is done by the wife with the help of relations or friends, as it is very light work. The ashes are then *kiguessa orek*, that is, scattered over the fields and left there to serve as manure and to fumigate the land.

(4) In Kiptamo (March) the guinea-fowl is said to come and to cry, "Okol! Okol!" plant! plant! In some kokotinwek there is an elder known for his knowledge of the movement of the stars. When Kiptamo has set in, he takes liquid snuff and distils it in his nose. He holds his nostrils with his fingers and, carrying his head very straight, looks underneath his eyebrows vertically towards the sky. If he can see the eight ² *kuromerik* (the constellation of the Pleiades), the time is ripe for sowing. If the peek is sown before this time, it is said that it will not grow and is called *chebemaë*. The Kuromerik are favourable to sowing for one month. In Tuatkut (April) they begin "falling" one by one and making a terrible noise, *Kurgung!* so that all the Kipsigis

¹ For a more detailed description of the importance of this institution vide *Mayuek ab Kokwet*, p. 145.

² The Kipsigis maintain that the Kuromerik are not seven but eight.

may know that it is useless to sow in the future, as the peek will follow the Pleiades and never rise up. At the end of the sowing period I was asked again and again if I had heard the famous *Kurgung*! and on receiving a negative reply, they all said that I could not have been listening very well. Mythical as it is, the story of the Kuromerik constellation is based on sound experience, as the growth of peek sown after April is handicapped by an unfavourable rainfall.

The sowing of the grain (*keleta kessuek*) is done by a specialist ¹ residing in the *kokwet* where the field lies. He is rewarded after harvest by a beer called *kipkoloit*. By the time sowing begins, the weeds have come up again. Gradually, as the grain is being sown, the usual team, if necessary with the help of the *kokwet*, start digging, so as to mix the grain with the earth. The second tilling is called *koolet*. When the digging is finished, the women *purpur*, that is, they shake the weeds which have been dug up, so as to detach all the earth from them and to throw back the grains. The weeds are then laid on the ground.

(5) Two to three weeks after *purpur* the women ² *pogot*, that is, they clean and throw away all the rubbish.

(6) A month later we are in Page or Ngeyiet (June or July). The weeds are now coming out and a most difficult task has to be done. In the larger fields the wife, her daughters and friends are not equal to the work before them, and the women of the *kokwet* are again asked to come and help, the beer of reward, *kipkoloit*, being drunk as a reward by their husbands after harvest. The first weeding is called *kibuch*. The second weeding, *Putet*, takes place four or five weeks later. This time a most thorough weeding must be done. The women sit on the peek and pluck each weed out individually. It is a minute and difficult task, requiring all the attention one would give to a piece of embroidery, 200 by 60 yards! This weeding, which begins in Ngeyiet (July), is only finished three months later, in Buret or

¹ In most cases a man.

² Wife with friends and relatives.

Epeso (October), when it is time for harvest. The women devote over six hours a day to it.

(7) Harvest, *Kessisy*, begins in Epeso or Kipsunde netai, when the peek is at a stage called *Mongorek* and is of a rich brown colour. It is finished by the end of Kipsunde netai (November), when even the stem is brown, and the peek is called *katchorot*.¹ The entire household helps in harvesting operations, both husband, wife, and children; and, if necessary, another kipkoloit beer is given to the kokwet, so that its members may come and help. Peek is a very short plant, and the cutting is performed in a sitting position. Each person has a small knife inside his right hand and plucks with its aid the grain, which he places in his left hand. When the left hand is full, he throws it into the basket in front of him.

(8) If the field is near the hut, the grain is put straight away on the *tabot*,² which has been previously strewn with tebengonik leaves. If the field is very far from the hut, the man digs a hole about $\frac{1}{2}$ foot deep and 3 to 4 feet wide, and this is strewn with the husks of last year's peek, so that the fresh crop should not touch the ground. This hole is called *ruagn*, and the grain is stacked into it in a pile and thatched with the stems of the peek. The grain is then gradually carried into the hut by the women. The stem, deprived of the grain, is usually left standing, and the goats

¹ If a rich vocabulary, used to indicate the different periods of the growth of a plant, is a sign of the antiquity of the practice of agriculture, the Kipsigis one should prove of some interest:—

- (1) Kabista, when the peek is just coming out.
- (2) Kabagoek, when the first knot appears.
- (3) Karobe, when the second knot appears.
- (4) Kassengen, when the bud appears.
- (5) Kaimet, when in flower.
- (6) Katoet: flower changing into grain.
- (7) Kengargarit, peek ripening but still soft enough to exude juice when squashed.
- (8) Messissrek, peek changes from green to yellow.
- (9) Kabelle, when the head is brown.
- (10) Mongorek, when rich brown.
- (11) Katchorot, when even the stem is brown.

² Granary in the roof of the hut.

and cattle of the master of the imbaret are brought to feed on it.

If the grain is wanted for immediate consumption, a rough tray of sticks is erected above the fireplace ; but it is more usual to dry it outside in the sun on a skin supported by four sticks, so that the goats may not eat it. This contrivance is called *saina*.

The threshing and pounding operations are all carried out by women. The peek is first scraped on a goatskin with a rough surfaced stone called *poreito*, the grain is then winnowed and put in a mortar (kenut), made from the hollowed trunk of a tree, and pounded with a pestle cut from the same tree. The pestle is called *aru' ap ken'* (*aru'et ap kenut*, the little goat of the kenut). The peek is then ground between two stones.

Harvest Ceremonies

When the harvest is finished, the members of the kokwet assemble to give beer parties, called *mayuek ap ingarek*. Every *temel* "branch" of a kokwet¹ must give at least one beer. Four—it is the sacred number—of its resident members assemble at the hut of the oldest or most respected among them, and each contributes one *kerebet* (basket, same as those illustrated in "Harvest") full of grain. Friends are also invited.² In the early morning, when the beer is finished, the owner of the hut takes a small calabash and makes a libation in front of his mabwai. Facing the rising sun, he asks Asis to bless the harvest of all present.

Every hut also has its own private ceremony, to which no person outside the household, even a close relative, is asked. After the family has partaken of the meal, in which the peek from the new harvest is used for the first time, the father with his sons goes to the injjor side of the hut and rubs the toloyta ab injjor with the remainder of the porridge, while

¹ *Vide* p. 177.

² It is becoming now increasingly common for more than four persons to assemble and give a beer, so that the expense may be smaller.

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the mother with her daughters goes to the koima side and rubs the toloyta ab koima and the pambane, wooden pillars of the hut, while all pray Asista, asking him to make the peek last until the next harvest and not to let them die of hunger.

APPENDIX

DIVISION OF LABOUR AND THE WORKING TEAM

<i>Type of Work</i>	<i>By whom performed</i>	<i>Reward</i>
(1) Mararet. Marking the boundaries.	Husband or wife.	
(2) Temisyo. First digging.	(1) Wife, seldom husband. (2) Relatives and friends. (3) Kokwet.	Reciprocity. Mayuek ab kokwet.
(3) Belso. Drying the turf in the sun and burning it.	Wife and daughters. Relatives and friends.	Reciprocity.
(4) Kiguesse orek. Scattering the ashes.	Wife and daughters. Relatives and friends.	Reciprocity.
(5) Keleta kessuek. Sowing.	One specialist (man).	Kipkoloit.
(6) Koolet, second digging and Purpur. Shaking the weeds.	(1) Husband and wife. (2) Friends and relatives. (3) If necessary, kokwet.	Reciprocity. Mayuek ab kokwet.
(7) Pogot. Clearing the rubbish.	Wife and women relatives and friends.	Reciprocity.
(8) Kibuch and Putet. First and second weeding.	(1) Wife. (2) Relatives and friends. (3) Kokwet (women).	Reciprocity. Kipkoloit.
(9) Kessisyo. Harvesting.	(1) Husband and grown up children of both sexes. (2) If necessary, kokwet.	Kipkoloit.
(10) All other operations before cooking, such as thrashing, winnowing and pounding.	Wife and daughters.	

It will be seen from this table that the best part of the work is done by the wife, who not only cultivates her own imbaret

a' mossop, but also works on those of relations and friends and other people of her kokwet, if her husband has drunk the Mayuek ab Kokwet or Kipkoloit of another man. The children of the house do very little work in the fields, as the boys are usually herding the cattle and the girls looking after the younger children or the cooking pots. The relations and friends come to help with the tacit understanding that their help will be reciprocated. The last element, and the most important, when cultivation on a comparatively large scale has been undertaken, is the kokwet. The kokwet is under no obligation to work in the fields of a man. It is the beer he gives which rewards the labourers, or more often their husbands, for their services, and everybody is free to attend that beer or not. The organization of the mayuek ab kokwet and the kipkoloit will be discussed later under "Mayuek".

(b) *The Cultivation of Maize*

The cultivation of maize, unlike that of peek, is a very simple affair, as in 99 per cent of the cases the fields are ploughed. In every kokwet one or two wealthy people possess a plough, and they hire them out to the others. The charge for renting a plough and six bullocks to cultivate a field about 100 ft. by 40 ft. is 12s.¹ or 8s. with three bullocks. The ploughing of Kapande, No. 19 on the map cost 16s. and was sold four months before harvest for 100s. Field No. 1 cost 8s. to plough and was sold seven months before harvest for only 12s., as it was sown too late and there was little prospect of a good crop. All the fields on Kipkoybon 1 were ploughed with Arap Seuer's plough.

The furrows are driven first in one direction and then vertically across, so that the lumps of earth are broken. Sowing should start in February, but is often left until the end of April, with the result that the crop fails. No specialist is needed for the sowing operations. When the maize is

¹ It normally takes three days to plough.

about a foot high, it is weeded ; but this is done with a hoe and is very easy. The maize is weeded again about two months before harvest, when it should be $1\frac{1}{2}$ yards high. The entire household helps during harvest.

The cultivation of a field of maize is a man's own concern. There is no reciprocity here, no help given by the *kokwet*, no ceremonial ; and the field may be sold by the husband without any previous consultation with his family--altogether a very sophisticated and un-Kipsigis state of affairs.

BEER

Mayuek (beer) is one of the most important factors regulating Kipsigis life. It serves as a formal payment for work done in the fields, is used in all ceremonial rejoicings, and round it are told the stories of the past by the elders. Beer parties do not only cement friendships and serve as a great educational force, but are also a criterion of popularity and thus are one of the means of establishing law and order. A man who is a habitual offender against tribal custom is ostracized from *mayuek*, and this is one of the most severe forms of punishment for any Kipsigis.

THE PREPARATION OF BEER

When the women have thrashed, winnowed, and pounded the peek, as described, the peek is ground in the *koit a' pei* (stone of peek) with a smaller stone, called *issiet*. The husband and his sons have by now brought *sosuek* (plantain) leaves from the forest. They dig a deep hole in the ground and border it with leaves ; the flour of the peek is then mixed with cold water in a *massendet* (closely woven basket), until it becomes a very thick paste ; it is then poured inside the hole, which is then covered with *sosuek* leaves and earth. The peek flour is left to ferment here for about ten days. The women will then take it out and boil it immediately in large earthen pots, without the addition of any more water. It is left on the fire until it is cooked to a deep brown

colour, then poured on a skin and left two days to dry in the sun. When quite dry, it is put in a basket and placed in the tabot, where it can be kept for a whole year, if necessary.

Another and much smaller lot of peek is now taken and thrashed, but not pounded. It is tied securely in leaves of sepetet, then placed in the river for twenty-four hours. Next day it is hung outside the hut, so as to strain it, then taken out of its cover of leaves of sepetet and left in the tabot for twenty-four hours. By the next morning the seeds of peek will have sprouted and they are put in the sun to dry. This peek is called *mermeruk* and cannot be kept very long, as the ants consider it a great delicacy.

When the moment has come to prepare the beer, the fried peek (no name) is mixed with the *mermeruk*, and cold water is added. This is considered as the first day in the preparation of the beer and is called *kirrieche* (making). At the end of the second day, called *kuntu* (boiling), and during the third (*murto*—mixed), the mixture undergoes a very strong fermentation and is seen boiling. It is now ready to be drunk, mixed with boiling water, on the fourth day, called *kie* (drinking) or *bo mayueh* (that of beer).

In the morning before the beer is served, the husband takes a little of it in a small calabash and offers libations in front of the following toloyta¹ and ormore (pillars) :—

- (1) Toloyta ab injjor } . Connected with the hus-
- (2) Toloyta ab koima } band's and wife's family.
- (3) Toloyta ab itok (bed) . So that he may have many children.
- (4) Toloyta ab kapsotol So that his stock may
(where the large milk calabash is kept) increase.
- (5) The two or more beside the So that his hut may be
entrance of the hut. strong and prosperous.
- (6) In front of the mabwai and facing the rising sun he makes
the last libation and addresses the usual prayer to Asis.
(*Asis konech tuga, konech lagoh, konech winda . . .* God
give us cattle, give us children, give us strength . . .).

¹ As the toloyta have a ceremonial significance, there are four of them, to abide by the sacred number.

A great number of pots (loet) are necessary for a beer, and very few men possess them all, so that they must go and ask members of their kokwet to lend some to them. This demand cannot be refused, unless the man is using the pot himself. The following pots, in order of capacity, are used during a beer :—

- (1) Kiptereget.
- (2) Kiptelanet.
- (3) Riseyuot ab Kiptereget (refill of Kiptereget).
- (4) Peek ab komek.
- (5) Riseyuot ab Kiptelanet (refill of Kiptelanet).

These pots must be used in their ceremonial order with the water pots and calabashes [(1) Tere ab ma, (2) Keregut, (3) Teret ap pe and the kipramut calabash].

Beer, according to the occasion, is drunk inside or outside the hut. Two holes are dug, and the *kiptereget* is placed in one and the *kiptelanet* in the other, the peek ab komek being placed between them. When the beer in the two large pots decreases, beer is gradually poured into them from the peek ab komek, which, when empty, is taken away. When both kiptereget and kiptelanet are empty, the wife goes to the teret ab ma, where water has been kept boiling all this time, takes it out with the kipramut calabash, and pours it into the keregut. The keregut is now brought near the kiptereget and the kiptelanet, which are filled from it four times (twice each). The beer paste, which is heavy, remains at the bottom of these two pots and, as the liquid decreases, more water is poured into these vessels and mixed by those drinking with the long rogorosiek tubes through which they sip. Every wife in the kokwet, whose husband is present at the beer, must assist the lady of the house in bringing water from the river.

When all the water from the keregut has been poured into the two major vessels, the Riseyuot ab kiptereget is brought out, full of beer, which is twice poured into the kiptereget and twice into the kiptelanet. The keregut also



MAYUEK AB MOSSOREK

Notice the long rogorosiek drinking tubes and the Kiptereget pot on the left and the Kiptelanet on the right—also the large basket on the extreme right advertising to passers-by the purpose of the beer party

is again brought, full of boiling water, and the same operation of adding twice to each pot is gone through. In the meanwhile the *Risseyuot ab kiptereget* has been placed between the *kiptereget* and *kiptelanet*, and it is used to increase gradually the beer in the two major pots. From now on the success of the beer is assured, and the times the *keregut* is brought full of water, so that the mixture at the bottom of the pots should be diluted and drunk, are not counted.

If, while the beer is on, a man whom the owner of the hut calls *pamwai* (brother) happens to pass by, he must be asked to drink. The "brother" must then perform exactly the same libations by the *toloyta* and the *mabwai* as the owner had done in the morning. He then takes some beer in a calabash (*kanekta* or *itotoi*) and pours beer round the *kiptereget* and *kiptelanet* pots, taking care not to close the circle. The opening he leaves he calls *ormarich* (kraal-door. We met the same name during the *yatet ap oret* ceremony in initiation) and prays *Asis* that through this entrance a great many cattle and children may enter his brother's kraal. He now drinks a little of the beer from the calabash and pours some into the two larger calabashes, and then calls one of his friends, who is sitting outside in the hope of being invited, to drink beer from his calabash. The latter does so, pouring the remainder into the two large pots and praying for the prosperity of the master of the hut, whose wife then kneels before the stranger, takes the calabash from his hands, and carries it back into the hut. The beer, with the exception of *mayuek ab kokwet*, is drunk inside the hut. The elders sit by the hearth and the young men opposite them. The pots are covered with *seretyot* grass, and the long *rogorosiek* drinking tubes spread from the mouth of the pots in a circle round the hut, each person using his own individual *rogoret* and sitting on a skin. At a word of command from an elder or *Kiplayat ab murenek* (Chief of the warriors), they all kneel and sing to the

accompaniment of their feet, drumming the skin beneath them. The only light in the hut is provided by the fire on which the water is boiling, and the shadows of the bodies swaying to a rhythmical tune form a very impressive and weird background. When the song is finished, the elders discuss past cattle cases or speak of the heroic deeds and the exemplary life of their forefathers. It is during those beers that the youngsters, although not allowed to drink before attaining a reasonable age, gather round to hear the words of wisdom. They are thus given lessons in ceremonial and rules of behaviour. After initiation the beer parties are certainly the greatest educational factor in Kipsigis life.

THE FUNCTION OF THE KIPTAYAT AB KOKWET

The Kiptayat ab Kokwet, although his name means "the chief of the village", has no other function than to be the regulator of beers given for work.

Whenever a member of the kokwet wants to give a beer, so that the other inhabitants of the village should send their wives to work for him, he must first consult the Kiptayat ab Kokwet, so that no two people may give a beer on the same day and also in order that he may send round word about the forthcoming beer. His function is an honorary one and he is not paid. The rule is that he must be invited to all beers given for work, but, if he accepts the invitation, he must send his wife to work, or go himself if it is man's work that has to be done. When the Kiptayat ab Kokwet is present at a beer, he is considered as the master of ceremonies and decides all questions of etiquette arising out of beer drinking. He can also ask the master of the hut to invite to the beer, without payment, any stranger who is sitting outside and who begs to be admitted on the ground that he is a traveller, now far away from his own hut.

The following are the beers given for work in the kokwet and for which the permission of the Kiptayat must be asked :—

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The following are the beers given for work in the kokwet and for which the permission of the Kiptayat must be asked:—

(1) *Mayuek ab Kokwet* (beer of kokwet). This is a general term covering all beers given as *advance* payment for some work to be done. Thus for *temisyo* (first digging operations) and *koolit* (second digging) the beer is drunk in advance.

The *mayuek ab kokwet* is drunk outside the hut, so that any person passing by may see it and join the party, sending in exchange his wife, or coming himself to work. If a person living in a neighbouring village wants to join the *mayuek ab kokwet*, he can do so, as the beer is given outside the hut and no special invitations are needed, so long as work is done in exchange; but most people sitting at the *kokwet* beer belong also to the *kokwet* of the man who is giving it.

(2) *Kipkoloit*. The *kipkoloit* is also a form of *mayuek ab kokwet*; but it is drunk only after the work has been done. Admission to it is by personal invitation only and, although friends from other *kokotinwek* may be asked as guests, the actual workers for whose reward the *kipkoloit* is given belong to the same *kokwet* as the master of the hut. The *kipkoloit* is given as a reward for sowing, weeding, harvesting, and for tying the *chagaik* (sticks) during hut building (*mayuek ab kamogulet*).

The *kipkoloit* is a much less mercenary form of beer than the *mayuek ab kokwet*, as not only is it not given before the work is done, but it may be offered as long as three or four years afterwards. This point is very important, if correlated to the fact that only members of one's *kokwet* participate in it. It shows that beer, at least in this case, does not serve to "pay" for services rendered, but is, rather, a ritual form of reward.

HELP GIVEN BY THE KOKWET TO ONE OF ITS MEMBERS IN CASE OF DISTRESS

There are cases when a man's harvest is insufficient to feed his family. His paternal relations, *mechegeren* and *kot-ap-chi*, must support him; but none of them alone will be

able to provide sufficient grain to feed the entire family for a whole year. The man then turns to his kokwet for help.

(1) In the case of a *newly married couple* taking up residence in a foreign kokwet all the neighbours invite them to share their food and provide them with maize and peek,¹ without expecting this to be returned when the husband has tilled an imbaret of his own. If they, in their turn, have during this period to do some work in the fields, the couple will help them even without being asked to do so.

(2) When a man's *harvest has failed*, he gives a mayuek ab mossorek (beer of grain) outside his hut (*vide* photograph), and puts near the beer-pot a large basket. This is an indication that whoever comes to drink of his beer will have to fill the basket with *peek*, after he has harvested his own field. The value of the beer drunk is not, of course, an equivalent to the grain given, but serves more as a pretext by which to attract the attention of the kokwet to the distress of one of its members. Friends from other kokotinwek, usually within the same "group",² may attend.

(3) When *a child is born to a poor man*, he can ask a rich neighbour to give him a piece of his imbaret a' mossop, if it is large enough. The wealthy man may then consult with the Kiptayat ab Kokwet to see if he can ask another *mogoriot* (wealthy man) to help him shoulder the burden; but he does not refuse to help if he can possibly do so, not only out of sheer humanity, but because it is a signal honour to be asked for help.

(4) If the harvest has not been gathered in in time, and rain is threatening to destroy it, he takes the *itet* stick (used for burning the interior of the calabash before milking) and goes to all his neighbours, asking them to come out and help him. This is called *saiset*, and is the symbolic manner of imploring a help which cannot be refused.

¹ During the first year of their residence until they have reaped the harvest of their first field.

² Group of kokotinwek, *vide* "Authority".

THE ENTREPRENEUR

If we define the entrepreneur as the person who takes the risks in an economic enterprise, we see the Kipsigis very often occupying that position, in most cases providing his own capital; that is, the wealth he has laid by for some future profitable use.

1. *Ploughs*

People who have sold a few cows to buy a plough have made large profits by this transaction, as they hire out the plough at a very high rate, the normal charge being 12s. for three to four days for a plough and six bullocks, or 8s. with only three bullocks, and 5s. for the plough alone. In three days a field 100 ft. by 40 ft. can be ploughed. Sometimes money is not demanded, but the man to whom the plough is lent is asked to assist the owner in ploughing or weeding his fields. It will be seen from map 1 of Kipkoybon that A. Seuer's fields were the largest in his part of the village, as he was the only owner of a plough and by hiring it out he could have men to work his fields gratis. Arap Seuer and Arap Maina (his fields illustrated in Kipkoybon, 2) were the only two owners of ploughs in the whole of Kipkoybon, and certainly the wealthiest men in their kokwet.

Beers

Beers given for work also necessitate a certain amount of foresight and of "saving" the grain from one harvest to the next, so that help may be given by the kokwet in the fields during the next season.

2. *Otwaget*

Otwaget is the name given to a poor Kipsigis who either through his own bad behaviour has estranged all his relatives, or, for some accidental reason, such as the death of his cattle or the loss of his kot-ap-chi, is in such a state of destitution

that nothing remains for him but to work for another man¹ in exchange for grain, goats, or money. The assistance given by the kokwet can only last from one harvest to the next, and a man has, then, to solve his own economic problems. As nowadays work is provided by the European farms, there are no real *otwaget*, since an *otwaget* must be a Kipsigis working for a Kipsigis.

On map 2 of Kipkoybon it will be noticed that Arap Maina has by far the largest fields in his part of the kokwet. The main reason for his wealth, apart from his ownership of the plough, is that he has a poor Jaluo pot-maker to work for him. His hut will be seen very near that of Arap Maina. This Jaluo has no cattle at all and lives in a very small *imbaret*, where he has to do all the work himself, as he can never save sufficient grain to give a *mayuek ab kokwet*. Arap Maina gives him sufficient grain from his own fields to support himself and, in return, the Jaluo must give him all the pots he makes during the year. Arap Maina sells the pots, and with that money he has bought a plough and can give beers for people to work on his fields. The Jaluo is in no sense of the word a slave to Arap Maina. He can move to another place if he likes; but he is a very shy creature and never moves from Kipkoybon.

Pot-making is not confined to the Jaluo, as some Kipsigis women have also learned the technique; but there were none in Kipkoybon or Kapkiam. The pots are nowadays usually sold for money, and the proceeds belong to the woman, who invests them in goats. There are also some Kipsigis *blacksmiths*, but I have not met them in my district, as the spears are usually made in Sotik, near the Masai Reserve. The pot-makers and the blacksmiths belong to the Toiyoi (Rain) clan, and no one will marry into a family engaged in one of those trades. The prohibition does not extend

¹ The term *Otwaget* does not imply simply that a man is working for remuneration, but that he is forced to do so because he is extremely poor. Squatters and daily workers on the European farms are not called *otwaget*.



Face p. 148.

PLATE XVI.

A LARGE FAMILY OF POT MAKERS EXPOSING THEIR WARE OUTSIDE AN INDIAN TRADING STATION

to the whole of this clan and, so I am told, not even to the Kot-ap-chi, but only to the sons and daughters, and this only during the first generation. The best swords and spears are made by the Kikuyu, and the Kipsigis buy these from them. The Kipsigis, apart from his cattle and his imbaret, is not interested in any other method of acquiring wealth. Weaving is totally unknown among them.

MARKETS

The markets are still in their infancy in the Kipsigis Reserve,¹ as the Kipsigis have very little to sell. The maize is sold to Indian shopkeepers, who have small establishments at the roadside in different parts of the Reserve, and from them are bought cotton-cloth, ploughs, hoes, ornaments, tea, and sugar. The administration is trying very hard to fix a fair price for maize flour and to protect the Kipsigis, who often sells for 4s. a bag, while the European has to pay 7s. to 10s. to buy the same from the stores.²

Outside the Indian Stores in Kericho many Kipsigis gather on Sundays to see the "town" and they have naturally developed a habit of bringing with them anything they want to sell, such as skins and pots. This "market" is in its infancy at present, but in three or four years it may assume considerable proportions.

CATTLE

In Kipsigis life, tradition, and mythology the cow has a place of its own and occupies in the minds of the people a position next in importance to that of their children.

Economically it is the *only form of investment possible*. Savings from the sale of maize, from work on European farms, and from any other form of activity are invested in cattle. They are not only the sole form of wealth, apart from money, that is not immediately perishable, but they also

¹ With the exception of the places appointed by the Government for the sale of cattle.

² From my own experience.

have the additional advantage of multiplying, if proper care is taken and if ceremonial prohibitions are strictly kept.

Their possession does not only increase the material wealth of a man, but also *enhances his social position* and, through the complicated system of Kimanagan exchanges, gains for him reliable friends and spreads the fame of his name among people living very far from his home.

Cattle are also the only acceptable form of settlement of the bride-wealth and of the indemnity paid for the murder of a man.

Kimanagan

This is the system by which a Kipsigis distributes his cattle among different friends living very far from each other, so as to protect it from rinderpest and from enemy raids.

When a man marries for the second time, he usually sends his first wife to live in a distant place with her eldest son, so that they may both keep for him part of his cattle. With every subsequent marriage he builds a new hut at another spot in the Reserve, and he thus succeeds in having his cattle scattered over a wide area, so that no misfortune may wipe out his cattle-wealth in a single stroke.

When all the households of a man have a sufficient number of cattle to provide them with milk and blood, they must give out *half* the new-born as kimanagan. Their friends ask them a long time beforehand for a calf and, as soon as it is old enough, they come and take it. If the calf is a bull, they wait until it is two or three years old and then exchange it for a heifer. The calves they have from the kimanagan cow they keep until the second or third generation and then begin distributing them, in their turn, to their own friends as kimanagan, without previous consultation with the owner ; and this goes on *ad infinitum*.

The man who has put his calf out will now ask *another* of his friends ¹ for a kimanagan, and thus the number of

¹ It is not the custom to ask the same man to whom one has given the kimanagan.

cows in his kraal will be approximately the same as if he had not been continually putting some out.

The more wealthy a man is, the easier it is for him to obtain one.

When a Kipsigis wants to keep a calf himself, so that he should not be troubled by people coming to ask for kimanagan, he produces an artificial sore on its nose, called *kipuser*. The sore is made to prevent the calf from drinking its mother's milk, but is also a sign that there are no kimanagan to be given.

A man who has many cows, and who does not easily refuse a kimanagan, is greatly respected, he is "neo", big; but if he keeps his cattle, he is called *kipmuoket*, that is, "a mean and unpleasant being."

Cattle once given out as kimanagan cannot be redeemed without an exceptional reason. Even if a man wants to marry his son, or if his other cattle have died, he cannot take all the kimanagan back, but must leave behind at least one calf. The only valid reason for asking for the complete return of the kimanagan cows is that the calves born to a cow in its new kraal have been short-lived. At the death of the original owner, his sons can ask for the kimanagan cattle to be returned; but one of the last commands of a good father is always said to be, "Do not take all the kimanagan from my friend. Leave him at least one to remember me by."

The man who takes the kimanagan is under no obligation to the man who has given it to him. The milk of the cow belongs to him, but if the cow or one of its calves dies, he must send back the skin to the owner. This is the only outward sign that the cow does not belong to him.

The kimanagan transactions of a man are kept a close secret from his wives, and there are many stories regarding the hardships of the men who confide such secrets to their wives, as they will try to dishonour their husbands by henpecking them into asking for their kimanagan back

when they find themselves in a difficult economic position. The men consider it a disgrace to ask for the return of their kimanagan, even if this means great hardship to themselves and their families. The following is the aphorism by which those stories end :—

Matijn kerotyēt ko maginwochin agot chepto.
Even first wife he is not allowed to tell her even his daughters.

Kinwochin ngetet inegen amun chechik tuguk
He tells the boy only him because are his everything ¹
Ani korgo age tugul ko punyon, magimwojjin kimanagan.
But woman everyone is enemy, cannot be told kimanagan.

The Care of Cattle

The cattle are kept in the *Piut ap tuga*, place of cattle, a very roughly fenced kraal. It consists of thorn tree branches stuck in the ground and held together by creepers, or, very often nowadays, by barbed wire. On the south of the kraal is a small singroina for the warriors and on its east side the hut of the man who looks after them. The daily routine is very simple. The cattle are taken by the younger boys to graze at about 6 a.m. and they return to the kraal between 11 and 11.30 a.m. The cattle are now milked by the women. They are then taken out to graze until sunset.

The cattle are taken once a month to the salt-lick by the warriors, usually at full moon, and this is the only time at which they have any artificial element introduced into their diet, which consists of grass.

The love of Kipsigis men and women for their cattle is extreme. They have nicknames for each one of them, and they themselves are very often known by them. The names of their cows are often introduced into their songs, and the young *mistoet*, shepherds, who take them out grazing, speak to them as we do to our dogs. They play with the young calves and fight with them, and often bite pieces off their ears when they do not obey their commands.

¹ The boy will inherit them.

The cattle give to the Kipsigis the nourishing elements in his diet : milk, blood, and meat.

Before the cow is milked, the calabash is thoroughly rinsed inside and cleaned with labotuet leaves and the kipkaüneit stick. Another stick, iitet, is then put in the fire, and the inside of the calabash rubbed with it. The ashes from it are then rubbed again with another small stick, the kipsutet. The milk takes the taste of ashes and of burned wood, and the Kipsigis do not like it unless it has that flavour.

Drinking milk and eating meat the same day is prohibited, as it is said to harden the udder of the cow. A man guilty of this offence is called *pitorindet* and can be publicly thrashed, if found out.

When they want to keep their milk for a long time, three or four days after milking they take the *sumarariet* (skin) from the milk, and thoroughly shake the calabash until all the water comes out. This process is repeated about a week later, and the milk now becomes as hard as *yoghourt*. They can leave it in that state for one month, and after that time has elapsed, it assumes a green colour and has a very pungent smell.

Butter (*mwaita ab chego*—the fat of the milk) is also made by shaking a calabash half full of milk until the butter forms. The skimmed milk that is left over is only drunk by women and children.

The milking is done by women. They tie the cow's legs, if it is restless, and milk directly into the calabash. If the calf has died, they stuff its skin with grass and present it to its mother, so that " She may not refuse her milk ". The *ndururet* (flute) is also played to the animal if it has no milk, so as to soften its feelings, or rather its udder, as the Kipsigis say.

Blood is also drawn from the cattle's neck veins and either drunk raw or mixed and cooked with vegetables. A small bleeding arrow (*loynet*) is shot with a bow from a distance of about one yard into the neck vein of the animal and then

immediately withdrawn. The blood now gushes out into a vessel that has been kept ready, but the wound is quickly healed again. This operation is very frequently performed, but on a different animal each time.

Bullocks are killed for meat, but cows are not, unless they are suffering from a disease or have attained old age.

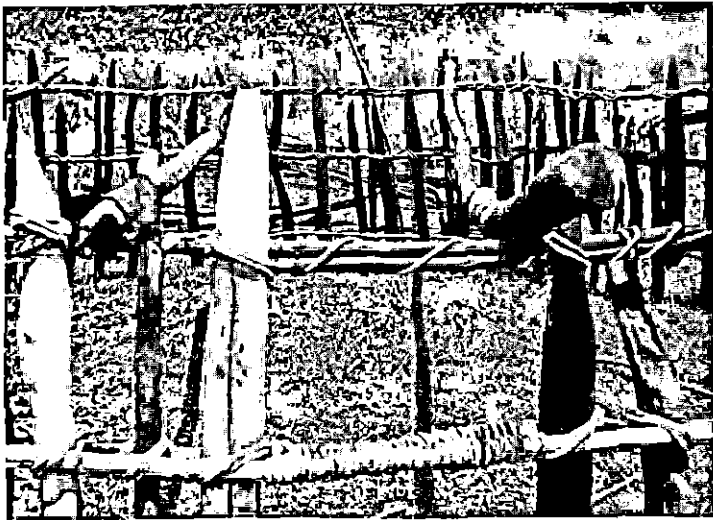
Sheep and the destructive goat are also kept in large numbers by the Kipsigis, as in most important ceremonies a goat is sacrificed and its entrails are used for haruspication. The milk of the goat is seldom drunk by men, but is chiefly used by children and women. The extensive damage it does by destroying saplings makes it a very unwelcome factor in Kipsigis economics. The only redeeming feature in favour of the goat is that it is "the poor man's cow".¹

THE HUT (KOT A' MOSSOP)

The construction of a hut plays an important part in the life of a Kipsigis, as it has to be repeated comparatively often. A hut may last for a great many years, if it is strongly built, but, in the meantime, a man will have had to build a hut for his second wife and helped his sons to build their singroina. A son never lives with his father after marriage, as the father is not allowed to sleep under the same roof as his daughter-in-law. Thus he will have to help each son to build his own hut, if they do not settle too far off.

There is no inaugural ritual when the erection of a hut begins. The owner chooses a suitable place and cuts the grass with a *panga* (trade knife). A *mussoindet* (man of knowledge) is then called and he marks on the ground with small sticks, called *kibute*, a large circle, indicating the circumference to be occupied by the building. The men will now go into the forest and cut down trees, which are carried

¹ A heifer is worth 14 goats or sheep (1 to 2 male). A cow in calf = 20-22 goats or sheep (2 male). A cow with calf = 30 goats or sheep (4 male). A bull = 8-9 goats or sheep.



FIRST STAGES IN THE ERECTION OF A HUT

PLATE XVIII.



INTERNAL PARTITION BETWEEN GROUND FLOOR AND GRANARY (TABOT)

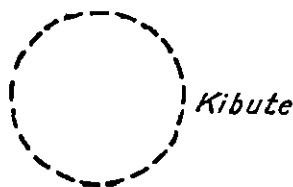


THE KOKWET HAS TURNED OUT TO HELP THE OWNER TO TIE THE
CHAGAIK

by their wives. They then shave the bark off and choose the strongest wood, usually the *mogonjjet*, to form the *lumeyuek*, which are the strong poles supporting the entire edifice (Plate XVII, p. 154) and which are driven about 1 foot into the ground.

The *nenget* is then tied inside the *lumeyuek*. It is composed of three sticks of the *kimolonik* tree, tied securely on the inside part of the *lumeyuek*. Another two sticks are then tied, one inside and one outside the *lumeyuek*, and this process is repeated a little lower down. Those sticks are called *ratutik* and are made from *simbeunik* wood.¹ The purpose served by both *nenget* and *ratutik* is to make the *lumeyuek* hold strongly together.

Some *pambanik* (Plate XVII (b)) are now added. The *pambanik* are very large trunks of the *chebchabayet* and the



sebetet trees and serve to separate the living room on the ground floor from the granary, *tabot*. The *pambanik* are fixed across the *nenget*, and facing the door, in *Kipsigis* huts. In *Nandi* huts they are fixed parallel to the door. This is a very good sign by which to recognize the tribe to which the owner of the hut belongs, as there are a great number of *Kipsigis* in the *Nandi Reserve* and many *Nandi* established among the *Kipsigis*. The *ruoyuek* are now laid across the *pambanik*. They are made of much thinner and lighter wood (Plate XVII (b)).

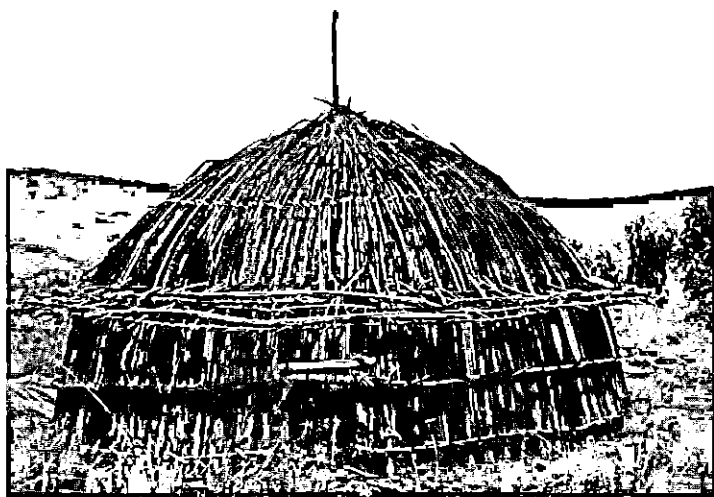
Across the *ruoyuek* and parallel to the *pambanik* are now placed very fine birches of wood tied together. They are called the *teteyuek*. When the harvest is ready, large leaves

¹ Here again I am forced to confess my ignorance of the English names of the plants I am describing.

are put on the *teteyuek* and the grain is spread on them. This upper story forms the *tabot* (granary).

Meanwhile, outside are added the *chagaik*, which are fine birches from the *tebenguët* or *kimoluët*, and form the real skeleton of the hut. Up to now the owner of the hut and his wife have done the best part of the work, but the tying of the *chagaik* requires the help of the *kokwet*, which is rewarded, when the hut is finished, by a *kipkoloit*, called *Mayuek ap Kamogulek*. The *chagaik* are bent at the top and tied together with *poronik* bark, which comes from the black-wattle tree. The top is called *kurgureyuek*. A piece of *simbeyuek* is then bent into a large ring of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet in diameter and is placed inside at the top of the hut. All the *chagaik* are now tied securely to it. This is called *questa* (Plate XIX (b)). More *chagaik* are now brought and tied to the *questa*. The first tying with the *poronik* is now strengthened by securing everything together with *turnoyet* branches. Two more *ratutik* circles are now made between the *questa* and the *pambonik*, so as to make the *chagaik* hold strongly together. On to the first circle of *ratutik* many *chagaik* are tied together, but on the second and wider *ratutik* circle, called *kimnyorbait* (Plate XIX (a)), every *chagaik* is tied individually. Each time a knot is not actually made, but *poronik* bark goes round each *chagaik*, then round the *kimnyorbait*, a knot being made only at the end of the *poronik*.

The *mololöonik* are then fitted. They are naturally V-shaped pieces of wood. Each one encloses two or three *chagaik* and rests on the *nenget* (Plate XX (a)). The purpose they serve is to form a veranda outside the hut, so that the water may trickle out. Women also very often sit under its shade, when they are grinding or pounding the *peek*. On the *molöolonik* are placed branches of various lengths, called the *ketik ap keter*, and which will, eventually, support the thatching. The veranda is called *keteret*. The *kimonjogut*, a pole penetrating about two feet into the hut, is now placed on the roof (Plate XIX (b)) and tied



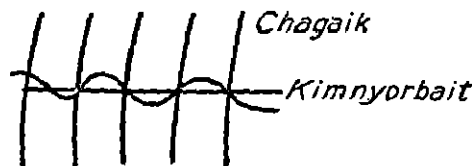
THE FRAME



THE QUESTA ON WHICH ARE BOUND ALL THE CHAGAIK

to the *chagaik* with the sacred *senendet* creeper. Three other sacred plants, the *labotuet* (sodom apple), *segetchenet*, and *kirundut*, are then *uprooted* (not cut) and tied on the pole with their root facing downwards. This is done to bring luck to the inhabitants of the hut, as those plants symbolize fertility and plenty.

The *kessiep kot* (thatching of the house) now begins. The members of the household usually suffice for this work. The grass, which the women fetch from the bush, is called *sotiet*. It is first put alone across the *mololoonik*. Branches of *tebengonik*, a shrub with very large leaves, are brought and laid on the *chagaik* and parallel to them, the thatch is then put parallel to the branches and leaves of the



tebengonik. The leaves serve as a support to the thatch and prevent the water from dripping into the hut. When the thatching is finished, a broken pot, called *rokyet*, is passed through the *kimonjogut*. The *Kipsigis* maintain that it has no special meaning, but is only there to keep the thatch in place.

To render the hut warmer, mixed cow, goat, and sheep dung is pasted on the inside of the *chagaik* as far as the *tabot*, that is on the ground floor, living room, which is not protected by the thatch.

Two or more pillars, *ngoromber* and *kapkeliën*, and the four *toloyta* are now erected in the interior of the hut. The importance of the *toloyta ap injjor* and of the *toloyta ap koima* is, as we have seen, mainly ceremonial; in any case, after the death of the master of the house, the *rokyet* pot, the *toloyta*, and very often the other pillars also, are discarded¹ without prejudice to the solidity of the hut.

¹ Vide "Death".

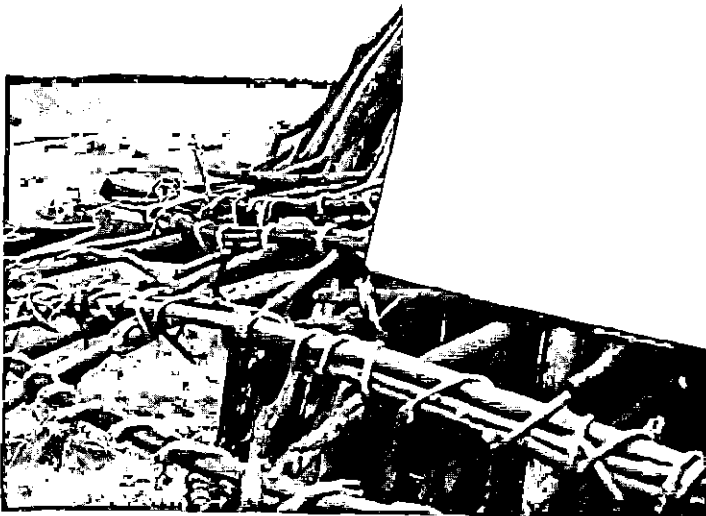
The interior of a Kipsigis hut is of the plainest. In earlier days two bedrooms, about 5 feet long and 4 feet wide, were built with sticks and dung. The A-roofed one was reserved for the wife, and the oval one for the husband (Plate XXI (a)), there was also an *itogut ap toek* for strangers. Nowadays they are a rarity. The husband, wife, and children simply sleep on cow-skins. At the sides of the hut there are small recesses in which the milk calabashes are placed, and a door is sometimes made, so as to enable the owner to shut the tabot granary. A narrow sewer is also made, connecting the hut with the exterior, so that the inmates may not have to go out of the hut at night when they want to urinate. On the right-hand side as one goes in, three large stones are placed, between which the fire is made. These, with three or four stools, complete the furniture and the comforts of the kot a' mossop.

In huts where a great number of goats are kept, the hut is divided by a partition, so that the goats may not worry the inmates at night; but this is a Nandi custom. The Kipsigis, who keep many goats, usually sleep in the tabot granary at night and leave all the ground floor to the goats.

About the orientation of the hut there is only one rule: the door (a skin or a piece of wood) must always face downhill, if it is built on a hill. If the hut is built in the plain it should face *either* East or towards the river.

CEREMONIES ON ENTERING THE HUT

When the hut has been finished and plastered with dung, the owner drives in a few goats and sheep; their dung will make the hut prosperous. He then takes a wooden board (*tarakuet*) in which four cavities have been made—they are called *korgot* (female)—and he drills a stick into them until fire is produced. This stick is called *kirgit* (the bull). Every day for four days the *kirgit* is rubbed into the *korgot* by the owner of the hut, and fire must be made out of every



THE MOLOLÖONIK AND THE KETIK AP KETER FORMING THE VERANDA

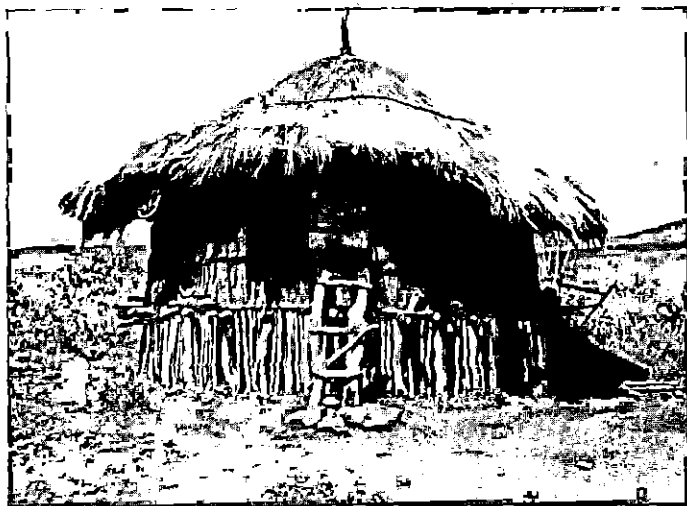


THATCHING

PLATE XXI.



THE INTERIOR OF AN OLD KIPSIGIS HUT



THE GRANARY OF A RICH MAN

single hole and then transmitted to a bunch of segetchenet and labotuet lying near it. This is done "to clean the hut and to pray God". It also has a practical utility, as it dries the dampness of the new hut. In the early morning of the fifth day the wife takes the ashes and spreads them round the hut, and on the sixth day the stones of the fire place are put in place. On the seventh day beer is prepared, and on the tenth day the neighbours are invited to celebrate the inauguration of the new hut. The mabwai, the sacred altar outside the hut,¹ has usually been put up on the eighth or ninth day. It is usually on the left-hand side of the entrance to the hut, as one goes in, and is composed of sticks of four sacred trees (lemeyuet, tebesuet, choruet, and sossitiet), firmly fixed in the ground and tied together (with ninjinchet and chemniolilet or kapkutuet). He then makes a libation of beer in front of the mabwai and, facing the rising sun, recites the following prayer:—

Asis konech tuga
 God give us cattle
Konech lagok
 Give us children
Konech peek
 Give us eleusine grain
Konech winda
 Give us strength
Tucheche indeech sumet neloui
 Cover us you put coat black ²
Konech tugul tugul
 Give us everything (bis)
Kagesai.
 We have prayed.

He then puts beer with the kipramut calabash on the four toloyta and then, pouring a little inside the beer pot, he drinks from the calabash.

During the first four days, while the fire is made with the kirgit, the man and his wife abstain from sexual intercourse.

¹ *Vide* "Religion and Magic".

² Referring to the black cloak worn by the elders, i.e. "let us live long".

CHAPTER IX

WAR, HUNTING, AND THE PURIET

War has always played a prominent part in the life of the Kipsigis, and their adventures with the Jaluo, the Kisii,¹ and the Masai constitute the bulk of the traditions about their glorious past handed down to the present generation.

The Kipsigis tradition is that over 100 years ago—nobody is in a position to give a date—they came from the country of Tto, near Lake Baringo, and found their present territory occupied by the Sirikwa tribe. The migration of the Kipsigis was caused by famine, and they were coming down south to look for better pasture lands. They first settled on a hill, called to this day Tulu ab Kipsigis, and then separated into two *puriosiek* (army groups), the Kasanet and the Kipkayge. They gradually fought their way south, until they had completely annihilated the Sirikwa and got as far as the Amala river. On their way they met with Masai, who often successfully stopped their advance, until they, in turn, were obliged to give up their grazing lands and to move south. The Amala river is to the present day the southern boundary of the Kipsigis Reserve.

The maintenance of a strong and disciplined army was, before British occupation, a question of life and death to all the tribes living near the war-like Masai; and the fact that the Kipsigis were more than able to hold their own against them speaks highly for their fighting spirit and the efficiency of their organization.

During the Great War the Kipsigis gave for the defence of the colony a greater number of volunteers than any single

¹ The Bantu Kavirondo Kisii are called "Kosobek" by the Kipsigis and are despised by them. The Nilotic Kavirondo Jaluo are called Jelua or Limek. Between them and the Kipsigis the affinities are greater.

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WAR, HUNTING, AND THE PURIET

War has always played a prominent part in the life of the Kipsigis, and their adventures with the Jaluo, the Kisii,¹ and the Masai constitute the bulk of the traditions about their glorious past handed down to the present generation.

The Kipsigis tradition is that over 100 years ago—nobody is in a position to give a date—they came from the country of Tto, near Lake Baringo, and found their present territory occupied by the Sirikwa tribe. The migration of the Kipsigis was caused by famine, and they were coming down south to look for better pasture lands. They first settled on a hill, called to this day Tulu ab Kipsigis, and then separated into two *puriosiek* (army groups), the Kasanet and the Kipkayge. They gradually fought their way south, until they had completely annihilated the Sirikwa and got as far as the Amala river. On their way they met with Masai, who often successfully stopped their advance, until they, in turn, were obliged to give up their grazing lands and to move south. The Amala river is to the present day the southern boundary of the Kipsigis Reserve.

The maintenance of a strong and disciplined army was, before British occupation, a question of life and death to all the tribes living near the war-like Masai; and the fact that the Kipsigis were more than able to hold their own against them speaks highly for their fighting spirit and the efficiency of their organization.

During the Great War the Kipsigis gave for the defence of the colony a greater number of volunteers than any single

¹ The Bantu Kavirondo Kisii are called "Kosobek" by the Kipsigis and are despised by them. The Nilotic Kavirondo Jaluo are called Jelua or Limek. Between them and the Kipsigis the affinities are greater.

tribe in Kenya, including the Nandi. Being keen sportsmen, they were rather disappointed by our methods of fighting, and they kept asking me if, during the next war, about the coming of which they have not the slightest doubt, they will be allowed to use their spears and swords. They are a truly Homeric race and, as man to man, one cannot help admiring them.

When the Kipsigis had settled down in their present territory, they stopped warring with their neighbours to obtain new pasture lands and in future only carried out raids to acquire cattle. Those raids could only be undertaken against the Jaluo and the Kisii on the West and the Masai on the South, as they could not fight against the Nandi, Keyo, and other tribes of the same stock as themselves in the North. The killing of a man belonging to one of these tribes would have made the offenders liable to an action for the payment of the tug' a' muget compensation. It is said that no war between the allied tribes has ever taken place. "We are all one people, our fathers were the same," as the Kipsigis put it.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE KIPSIGIS ARMY

The Puriet

The Puriet is another of the social groupings into which the Kipsigis are drawn from the moment of their birth. There are four Kipsigis puriosiek, Kipkayge, Ngetunyo, Kasanet, and Kebeni.¹ The Kipkayge with the Ngetunyo and the Kasanet with the Kebeni are united together without any possibility of saying which one is a subdivision of the other. Before the battle of Ngoino (v. p. 163) each puriet formed separate files (kwanaik), but for large-scale hunts or raids the Kipkayge joined with the Ngetunyo (and the Kasanet with the Kebeni), the spoils being equally divided among the two "brother" puriosiek. Every man,

¹ The names of the four puriosiek are said to be those of four Kipsigis heroes who came into being at the time of the creation of the earth by Asis.

from the moment of his birth, belongs to the puriet of his father. The women have no puriet.

There is a tradition that, as the two first puriosiek separated, each fighting its own way, the Kipkayge-Ngetunyo crossed the Chemosit river and went towards Sotik, while the Kasanet-Kebeni remained on the Peelkut side. The administration was kind enough to put its books at my disposal, and out of the 441 cases I have examined this contention is borne out by 301. This average of nearly 70 per cent is a strong argument in support of that story, as a decided movement to and fro between the two sides of the Chemosit has since taken place, with the opening of the roads, the facilities of transport and the migration of labourers. The puriosiek may thus have been at some time geographical divisions grouping, I surmise, many clans into one fighting unit. In any case, at the present moment, although the Kipkayge-Ngetunyo and the Kasanet-Kebeni may predominate in certain places I have *never* met with even one Kokwet composed exclusively of members of one subdivision. Thus the puriet has no administrative role in everyday life, and the pōsiek, Kiruogik, Kiptaynek, and Poysiek ap Tumda exert their authority over their territorial divisions, whatever the puriet of the persons under their jurisdiction might be.

As both clan and puriet are hereditary, it should have been easy to come to a decision,¹ but, whereas a man cannot change his clan, it is possible for him to change the puriet of his children. In a numerical study of the Lion clan, I found that, out of 157 Talai, 113 belonged to the Kipkayge-Ngetunyo puriosiek, and 44 to the Kasanet-Kebeni. Thus, for the present, this problem must remain partially unsolved, although there is some statistical support for this theory.

¹ As to whether originally all the members of one clan belonged to the same puriet and this puriet was a geographical division (*vide* also the Kipsigis' myth as to the origin of the puriosiek, pp. 236-7).

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The Kipsigis and the Nandi have corresponding puriosiek, so that if their warriors settle in their brothers' country, they can immediately be incorporated into one of their puriosiek. Thus a Kipkayge or Ngetunyo man will be Kamelilo in Nandi, and a Kasanet or a Kebeni a Kapchep-gendi. Parts of two Nandi puriosiek, the Kapsile and the Murgaptuk, have become merged in the Kipsigis puriosiek, the Kapsile becoming part of the Kipkayge, and the Murgaptuk of the Kasanet.

If the children or the wives of a man keep on dying, he will ask permission from the poysiek ab puriosiek to change the puriet of his children by a future wife. On ratet day he will invite his own puriet, which will sit on the injjor side, while the other puriet will sit in koima with his wife, this being a symbol that his own puriet offers a wife to the other. If boys are born of this union, the first one must belong to the puriet of the father, and only the younger sons to the new puriet of adoption. This custom may afford an explanation of the problem of a single clan having members belonging to both puriosiek; as, if all the members of a clan-subdivision are descended, as they claim, from a common ancestor, there would have been no reason why all the members of one oret (clan) should not also be members of one puriet.

Function of the Puriet and Organization of the Army

Until the end of the Kipkoymet age-set, each puriet went to war alone to capture its own cattle, and when, in exceptional cases, they united their forces, they kept their puriosiek¹ apart, each hoping to capture the greatest number of cattle and not to have to share them with their rivals. This lack of unity and of co-ordination of the two halves of the Kipsigis army proved disastrous, and at the battle of Ngoino² the Kipsigis were heavily defeated.³ The poysiek ab puriosiek

¹ Each raiding-party was divided into smaller groups (kwanaik).

² Kipkoymet age-set.

³ By the Kisii.

met after this to decide what caused the rout of the Kipsigis *luget* (army) and attributed it to the fact that Kasanet and Kipkayge, instead of co-operating during the battle, fought separately as they were trying to gain exclusively for themselves the whole of the enemy's stock. It was decided that in future the four *puriosiek* should be represented in every engagement and that every *kwanet* (file) should have representatives of all *puriosiek* in equal numbers in its midst.¹ It is interesting to note that, although the composition of the *kwanet* was changed, in all symbolic ceremonies, such as those of initiation and of rootet, the formation of the *kwanet* has remained the same as of old, being composed exclusively of members of a single *puriyet*.

The Kipsigis *luget* (army) is organized on a different basis, according to whether its aims are defensive or offensive.

The everyday, *the defensive army*, is organized on a territorial basis. A number of *kokwotinwek* are grouped together under a military, a civil, and a religious authority.² In every *kokwet* there is one *Kiptayat ap murenek*, whose function it is to keep his warriors in order and himself to obey the orders of the *Kiptayat neo nebo murenek*³ (the great chief of the warriors), who rules over the warriors of the *kokwotinwek*-group. When the *saget ap eito* ceremony was still taking place and one age-set was strictly separated from the next, immediately after the strangling of the white bull, new elections were held by the *Kiruogindet neo* (the Great Judge) and the *Poysiek ab Kokwotinwek* (the elders of the village) of the "group", and the most

¹ Thus, before the battle of Ngoino, only part of a *puriyet* living in one district (*emet*) formed the raiding party. This *puriyet* could also have asked for the help of its "brother" *puriyet*, but the two groups of *puriosiek* did not join forces except when they had to repulse an enemy raid. After Ngoino equal numbers of men from all four *puriosiek*, living in one *emet*, joined for the purpose of raiding their enemies.

² This confederation of villages I have here called "group", in the absence of a Kipsigis word. It is studied under "Civil Authority".

³ Those long titles are only used by the Kipsigis to distinguish one *Kiptayat* from the other. The usual expression is "*Kiptayat*", meaning chief.

promising warriors appointed to those posts.¹ Now that no raids are organized by or against the Kipsigis, the elders are no longer interested in these elections, and the warriors of every kokwet appoint their own leaders. Arap Terer, the greatest of all Kipsigis warriors, disdainfully described the new leaders to me as, "Kiptaynek ab Kambaget," "the leaders of the dance," their present-day function being to see that order prevails during rejoicings and to keep their men from turning the wrestling displays between kokwotinwek into battle-fields. For this purpose, whenever a *kambaget*, which is a dance sometimes followed by wrestling displays, is organized in a kokwet *outside the group of the Kiptayat neo*, the young men of each kokwet must beg for the permission of their Kiptayat to attend, and the Kiptayat himself must ask the Kiptayat neo nebo murenek.

Before the pacification of the country, the warriors of the kokwet under their Kiptaynek had as supreme duty to defend the territory of their villages and to drive the cattle of the kokwet to graze and to the salt-lick. While the cattle were grazing, warriors were posted in trees growing on hills overlooking the valley and, as soon as a raiding party of enemy warriors was sighted, they raised the shrill "wagat" shout, calling their men to arms.

The *offensive* organization was organized on a wider territorial basis. The Kipsigis have divided their land into four *emotinwek* (districts), Peelkut, Waldai, Puret, and Sot; and each of these carried out its own raids, without asking for the assistance of its neighbours. The four *retired* army captains of the emet (poysiek ab puriosiek), with the help of the Kiptaynek ab murenek of the different kokwotinwek, picked fifty to sixty experienced warriors from *each* puriet and divided them into four kwanaik.² At the head of every kwanet was a Kiptayat ab puriet, and the Commander-in-

¹ Kiptayat of the warriors of the kokwet and Kiptayat of the warriors of the "group" of kokwotinwek.

² Singular kwanet = army file. The raiding party must thus have comprised 200 to 240 warriors (50 or 60 $\times$ 4 puriosiek).

Chief of the four kwanaik was the Kiptayat neo nevo puriosiek.¹ Long after the kwanet ceased to be composed of members of a single puriet to the exclusion of all others, the leaders retained the name of Kiptaynek ab puriosiek.

The choice of the four Kiptaynek ab puriosiek and of the Kiptayat neo was an event of a much greater importance than the election of the small leaders of their kokwet. All the retired Kiptaynek ab puriosiek,² presided over by the retired Kiptayat neo nevo puriosiek, met and discussed the qualities of the warriors of the new generation. Questions were then put to each, and those who showed the qualities most needed for military leadership were the ones to be chosen, lack of bravery being an eliminating factor from the outset.

Two sets of questions were put to the future Kiptaynek :

(1) A theoretical raid must be carried out. Given the position of the enemy's huts and kraals, his numerical strength and the physical obstacles on your way, what would be your tactics for drawing away the majority of his stock with the minimum loss of life to your kwanaik ?

(2) A detailed knowledge of auspices, the most important of which was the cry of the kipteleliet bird. The future Kiptayat is given a few warriors to lead and is accompanied by the elders. When the cry of the kipteleliet is heard, the leader must stop dead and examine the position of his feet, body, and head, and the direction in which his eyes were gazing, and decide accordingly if the raid should be carried out or not. If the song of the bird is " aimed " at the right side of his head or at his thigh, the raiding party must return at once.

When a Kagibokta luget (raid) has been decided on by the Kiruogindet neo and the Poysiek ab puriosiek, spies (segeik

¹ Also called " Kiptayat neo nevo murenek ".

² After their ipinda had been " cut " they were called poysiek ab puriosiek. They were consulted on cattle cases.

and yotindek) are sent in advance to report on the best time to attack the enemy and of the whereabouts of their cattle. The segeik hide in the bush during a whole month, surveying the enemy's position, and then send back an alamalyet (messenger) with the information they have gathered.

The segeik were chosen from among the bravest of the warriors and, when cattle was captured as the result of the raid they had planned, they were rewarded by the pick of them.

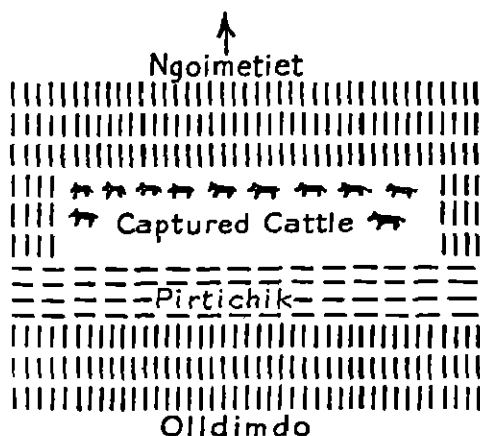
Before the luget marched, nine sogoldaik (scouts) were sent in advance, to report on the road and on the movements of the enemy. The number of sogoldaik ¹ is symbolic, as it is said that nine is the greatest number of children a woman can bear ² and thus, here, that the luget following on the steps of the nine sogoldaik will capture the greatest possible number of cattle.

During the daytime the warriors walk in single file, but when night falls, they separate into four kwanaik, commanded by the four Kiptaynek ab puriosiek, and each kwanet is subdivided into smaller files, each led by a Kiptayat ab murenek; while the whole army obeys the Kiptayat neo nebo murenek (also called Kipt. neo nebo puriosiek). The warriors follow, as far as possible, the course of a river, so as to be hidden from sight by the thick bush and forest which grows on its banks. The attack must be carried out before daybreak, so that the enemy may be taken by surprise. On reaching the kraal of the enemy (punik), the four kwanaik will form the storming party, while inexperienced or elderly warriors will drive off the cattle. The bowmen occupy all the strategic positions, of which they have learned from the descriptions of the spies, while a special corps, called "lumwet", is detailed to watch the road and to ward off anyone coming to the help of those attacked. In

¹ From sogol, nine, and oik, spirits (?).

² The number 9 also plays an important part in the eit' a' muget, a ceremony of old age.

the hand to hand fighting the spear (ngotit), sword (rotwet), and the club are used (*vide* frontispiece). The rotwet sword can be thrown from a distance, and with a spin, so that by ricochetting it can wound many warriors. When the battle is over, the army, with the captured cattle in their midst, assumes the following formation :—



The advance guard, Ngoimetiet, and the rear guard, Olldimdo, were members of the four kwanaik and the pick of the warriors. They surrounded the cattle, so as to forestall any counter-attack by the enemy on the rear, or by warriors seeking to intercept them on their way. The Pirtichik (also called samburto) are inexperienced young men, or warriors whose ipinda has been "cut" and whose function it is to drive away the cattle and to instruct the inexperienced warriors in the art of fighting, explaining to them the strategy of the battle and also the "beaux coups" given and received as the battle was being waged. They take no part in the fighting.

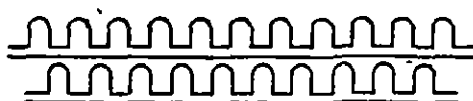
The cattle which have been captured will be divided among the warriors by the retired captains, the poysiek ab puriosiek, on hearing of the valour shown by each man, and some cattle must also be given to them by the warriors "to honour

them". The fact that some warriors will be left without any cattle does not mean that they will not eventually participate in the spoils, as the increase of the stock captured during the wars must be divided among those who were not given anything at the moment of the partition.

On returning to their villages, the warriors set up the *iiió/ogoī/yó* cry from afar, to indicate that their efforts have been crowned with victory, while those who have succeeded in slaying an enemy sing, *iióp/muramba*¹/Kebeni, or whatever their puriet is, while their womenfolk run to greet them on their way and throw grass at them, on which they have previously spat, as a sign of blessing.

The warriors who have actually slain an enemy are *simda*, unclean, and must purify themselves before going back to their everyday activities.

After the battle the weapon with which he has slain an enemy is handed to a warrior who had also been *simda* during a previous encounter. He washes the spear with water and a leaf and hands back the leaf to the killer, who licks it. On arriving at his *kokwet* the *simda* man paints the right side of his face and body with red earth, and the left with white, *engariet* and *ewariet*; this design is called *kimore*. On his arms he will paint the designs



(red, white, red, white), seen on the shields carried by the warriors of the photograph (frontispiece). For four days after this, he must sleep in the *singroina* and also sacrifice a white goat, the meat of which represents his uncleanness and can only be eaten by warriors who have also been *simda*, or by uncircumcised boys.² During the four days of seclusion in the *singroina* he must live on meat and not drink milk or

¹ Meaning unknown.

² Who are unclean by definition.

eat grain, as, if he does, the cow's milk will dry up and the fields wither. On the fourth day he drinks *kibogonyik*, a very strong purgative, "to wash his stomach" of the simda, so that he may drink milk. But even now he cannot have sexual intercourse with his wife or with a girl. He must find a barren woman and rape her. The woman must be barren; otherwise contact with his Simda would cause her to become barren, and this is exactly what he wants to avoid happening to his wife or sweetheart.

PEACE (KALIET)

If the battle has been raging for very long, and a whole luget stands in danger of being annihilated, an elder accompanying the army plucks an ostrich feather from one of the warriors' *sombet* headdress¹ and, rushing between the two armies, he sticks it in the ground. *Kilumndo songoliet*, "is upright the ostrich feather," say the Kipsigis, and from this moment the warriors on both sides have to put down their weapons and stop the fighting, as it is said that the *chubisiet* (curse) of the old man, followed by rapid death, would be the fate of those who disobeyed him. This custom is accepted by all the neighbouring tribes, including the Kisii.

This first action, *kaliet*, must be followed by *massagissiet*. The Kipsigis elder takes the *njecheret*, sacred stool of the elders, covered with dung and *tug' ap labot*, the signs of fertility and plenty, and places them outside the hut of the chief elder of the enemy warriors. The elders of the two tribes then meet and decide on peace terms.

After *massagissiet*, an oath (*mumek*) must be taken by those who have negotiated peace, declaring that the tribes will not fight against each other any more. The *mumek* is made either by spilling blood, stepping over a bow, breaking the bone of an ass, or by cutting off the tail of a

¹ Ostrich feather headdress (*vide* frontispiece).

puppy, this last being the more usual. The elders of the two tribes face each other and hold the dog between them. Then an elder of the tribe which has asked for kaliet cuts the puppy's tail, and each party throws the part of the dog they have in their hands in the direction of their own country, the Kipsigis reciting this formula :—

Ngotatun kisibwok komatatun
 If some day we follow you may some day
Kwamech mumechu kot kotarech.
 hurt us this mumech till finish us.

The massagissiet ceremony was also performed when the Kipsigis wanted to open trading relations with their neighbours, in order to buy grain on account of famine in their own land. An individual way of asking for mercy during the battle was to snatch up a handful of grass and throw it at the opponent. Both the Masai and the Jaluó followed this custom, called *saiset*, and were, for this reason, respected opponents during war and considered as sportsmen playing the rules of the game. The Kisii, who did not accept *saiset*, are said to be *kou ngogi*, like dogs. The Masai were the most respected of all the tribes called *punik* by the Kipsigis, as they showed great deference towards the sacredness of the *mabwai* and did not kill a man who was holding it.

There were, between two enemy warriors, definite rules of courtesy, deference to which classed the opponents as a man or a *kou ngokto*.¹ Apart from the acceptance of the massagissiet and the *saiset* customs, there was the treatment of women, children, and of the enemy's huts. The Kipsigis seem to have always been averse from setting their enemies' huts on fire unnecessarily and did not kill the women and children of their *punik*, but carried some of them off into their own country, where they ceremonially adopted them and by so doing gave them the status of fully fledged members of their tribe. There are many Kipsigis who,

¹ A "dog-like" being.

to this day, are called punotion.¹ One of them I know is a Kiptayat ab murenek in Peelkut.

HUNTING

In the agricultural and pastoral districts there is no organized hunting. Small duikers may be shot with bow and arrow,² and small rodents destroying the grain trapped with a snare. Big game hunting, the national Kipsigis sport, can be had in the Mau forest. The purpose of these hunts is not only to kill dangerous animals, in the destruction of which not even 5 per cent of the party are interested, as they live very far from them, but the blooding of their spears by the young warriors and the boasting to their sweethearts. It seems that in all cultures the main function of male courage is to add a few striking deeds as a halo round one's name, and then to parade like a peacock before the admiring glances of the females.

The big game hunted by the Kipsigis is buffalo, elephant, and leopard.³ The buffalo's trail is followed all day until the animal is exhausted; it is then driven towards some trees full of Kipsigis bowmen, who shoot at the animal as it passes beneath them. The elephant is either trapped into large cavities made in the ground, sometimes with a spike at the end, or shot at with arrows and spears.

The only large-scale hunt organized during my stay and in which I took part as a guest was a leopard hunt.

The leopard had made a nuisance of itself by killing the goats of a kokwet, and it was decided to kill it. As soon as the warriors, even far away in the Reserve, heard the news, they came trooping to the meeting place, until about 400 of them were assembled. At sunrise two warriors went to see if the leopard was still in its lair and, when they reported that it was, a small number of warriors stood guard over all the outlets. The bulk of the warriors, about 300 strong,

¹ But only during ceremonies, when praises are sung of the gesta of their ancestors. ² Or with light spears thrown from a distance.

³ Sometimes lion, but they are rather scarce.



Face p. 172.

PLATE XXII.

THE WARRIORS HAVE CLOSED THEIR CIRCLE ROUND THE LEOPARD'S LAIR. THE LEOPARD HAS BEEN DETECTED AND THE SPEARS ARE RAISED IN ANTICIPATION

advance in small groups and silently form a circle round the leopard's lair, cutting the bush and felling the trees with their knives as they advance, so as to prevent the leopard from hiding in the bush. The circle now gradually becomes narrower, until all the warriors stand shoulder to shoulder, forming a circle, with a radius of about 100 yards, round the thick bush and the trees in which the leopard is hiding. Over the noisy activities now falls a deep hush, and a man



Rabarwet of Warriors

of the cheeplanget ¹ clan addresses his fellow clan-member in the following terms :—

Ibarate tuguk ab piik nego ak tuga
 You kill things of people goats and cattle
ko kachubiu ak inye amun ibo
 for this I curse you, and you because you belong
ornyou kawirenen sogon.
 our oret I throw you leaf.²

He then throws a leaf in the direction of the leopard. All the warriors now raise their spears to their shoulders, as if they were making ready to throw them or to stab,

¹ Leopard.

² That is, he excommunicates the animal. The same ceremony is performed when a man is thrown out of the family after committing a crime (*vide* Law).

and they accentuate the following spell of the leopard man by stepping forward with the left foot and thrusting with the spear at the end of each sentence, while intoning a deep mmm. The Cheeplanget man now goes on cursing the animal :—

<i>Olenjin tioni meat ole meat</i>	Warriors
Tell him animal dead say dead	m.m.m.
<i>Olenjin tioni mumet ole mumet</i>	Warriors
Tell him animal close say close ¹	m.m.m.
<i>Olenjin tioni nam musuk ole nam</i>	Warriors
Tell him animal catch tree stump say catch ²	m.m.m.
<i>Olenjin tioni kwong ole</i>	
Tell him animal be caught unaware say	
<i>kwong</i>	Warriors
caught unaware	m.m.m.
<i>Olenjin tioni par lakwa ole par.</i>	Warriors
Tell him animal killed (by) child say killed. ³	m.m.m.

Now the warriors belonging to the kokwet whose cattle has been attacked by the leopard advance inside the rabarwet⁴ (circle of fire), holding their spears and shields in their left hand, and felling more trees and cutting the bush with their knives. Behind them come more warriors from the same kokwet, beating their shields with their sword or spear, while some of them blow in their horns, so as to scare the animal and drive it out towards the expectant warriors. Some warriors now take up positions on the fallen trees inside the circle with bows and arrows and, as soon as the leopard makes a dash for freedom, it is speared and shot with the bows.

APPENDIX. LEOPARD TRAP

Apart from the usual snares for small animals, the following trap is, I think, peculiar to the Kipsigis in many

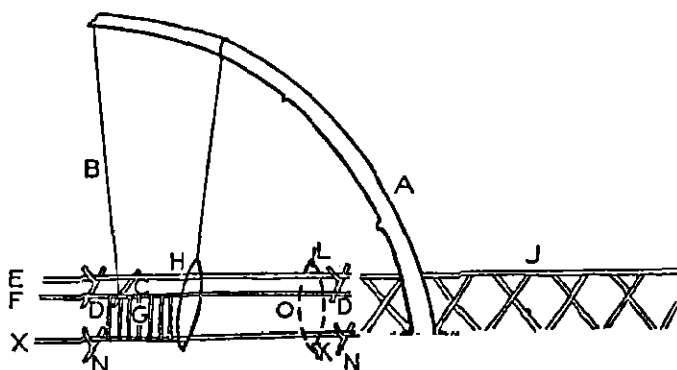
¹ That it may close its paws, so that its claws may not hurt anybody.

² That instead of catching a man it may catch a tree stump. I am told by a Puret man that this part of the curse has been abandoned in Puret, as the leopard, being told to catch a tree-stump, caught a man instead; and thus the presumed similarity between a man and a tree proved detrimental to the man instead of favourable, as was the object of the curse.

³ That it may become so weak that even a child could kill it.

⁴ Thus it is only the people who have a personal grudge against the leopard who try to drive it out, and thus run the greatest risks.

ingenious details. I am illustrating it, as it is the only complicated trap they use. *A*, a strong young sapling, is firmly embedded in the ground on a path known to be followed by leopards, and a fence, *J*, is erected on one side, so as to force the victim to follow the path. A rope, *B*, made of any strong creeper, is attached to its end and terminates in a small stick, *C*. Two forked sticks, *D*, are now put in the ground, a stick, *E*, passed across them and resting on their γ , while another stick, *F*, is only supported on their side by the pressure produced by the tree on *C*, which is now introduced between them. Two more forked sticks, *N*, are now put in the ground, and a stick, *X*, is laid



between them, while more sticks, *G*, are laid across *F* and *X*. A loop, also made of creeper, *H*, hangs from the middle of the tree, and a secondary loop, *O*, is sometimes attached to the ground by the two sticks, *L* and *K*. When the animal has passed its body through the two loops and is emerging from loop *H*, it must step on the sticks, *G*, which, by releasing *C*, allow the tree to swing to its normal position with great force, loop *H* and the front part of the leopard's body following this movement. But loop *O* will oppose this upward swing, and the sudden violent movement in two different directions immediately breaks the animal's spine and kills it.

CHAPTER X

CIVIL AUTHORITY AND LAW : PROPERTY, DEATH, AND INHERITANCE

The Kokwet, composed of the group of people who co-operate in the work of the fields and render reciprocal assistance to those of their members who are in ill health or poverty stricken, is also the basic unit of administration. In every kokwet there is an elder, the *Poyot ab Kokwet*,¹ distinguished by his sagacity in judging cases and his rhetorical gifts. Above him is the *Kiruogindet neo*, the Great Judge, who groups under his authority a number of kokwotinwek and, with the help of the Poysiek, can decide matters concerning the welfare of the community. This "group" of villages, called Emet, Koret, or Sirtitiet, has no specific name, as all these titles mean only "country" or "place"; but it is usually known by the name of the most important kokwet of the group. The fact that there is no special name attached to this comparatively large area, ruled by a definite administrative personnel, must have puzzled many field-workers among the Nilo-Hamitic peoples of Kenya, as no real system of administration has ever been ascribed to these tribes. This group, or territorial unit, has at its head a civil, a military, and a religious authority—the *Kiruogindet neo*, the *Kiptayat neo nebo murenek*, and the *Poyot ap Tumda*. Each one of them has his own attributes and his own field of authority, but, although the religious authority is completely independent of all the others, the chief of the warriors must in all important matters consult with the *Kiruogindet neo* and obey his orders.

¹ Elder of the kokwet.

THE POYOT AB KOKWET

The numerical importance of a kokwet varies widely with the districts. It may comprise any number of huts from fifteen to sixty, as some districts are more closely populated than others. The kokwotinwek, according to their importance, are subdivided into a number of *temenik* (branches), deriving their names from some peculiarity; ex. gr. Kipkoybon from its kipkoybet trees, Chesumot from the name of a warrior killed here by the Masai, etc. In most temenik there is a respected elder who, having made a practice of attending trials, is well versed in Kipsigis law, and who acts in an advisory capacity as a henchman of the Poyot.

The Poyot, like all Kipsigis civil and religious authorities, is not elected. He is the *chemengesh*, i.e. the assistant, of a former Poyot who has died or has retired through old age; but this does not mean that public opinion plays no part in his nomination. If the inhabitants of a kokwet do not like the chemengesh of the living Poyot, they will make him feel that he is undesirable, and the Poyot will take a new chemengesh, so that at his death or retirement the transmission of authority from one person to the other will pass smoothly.

The function of the Poyot is very similar to that of a "Justice of the Peace". He tries small cases between members of his kokwet, with the help of his chemengesh and of the elders of his temenik. By living during my whole stay in the Kipsigis Reserve near Arap Seuer, the Poyot of Kipkoybon, and seeing how he acted in the course of the numerous cases which he had to try, I was convinced that he acted much more like a friend and a mediator than a judge. Whenever there is a serious disagreement about some matter between two members of a kokwet, they go to the old man of their temet and explain to him their point of view. This elder will try to reconcile the parties and if he does not

succeed he sends them to the Poyot. Each of them will come and explain his point of view, asking the Poyot to call his *kapkiruok* (council of elders); but he will refuse to do so until he has exhausted all his persuasive powers in trying to patch up their quarrel, and only if he is unsuccessful will he take up the case and present it before his elders. His fame lies in his ability to mediate and reconcile adverse opinions.

Thus the Poyot acts in an advisory capacity, he is a mediator and a judge; but he cannot give orders or exercise any form of authority, beyond the judging of the cases which are brought to him.

Other representatives of authority in the kokwet are the Kiptaynek ab murenk¹ and the Kiptayat ab Kokwet,² whom we have already described under "Military Organization" and "Organization of Economic Life".

For many a weary month I could get no further than this point. The Poyot, acting as a Kiruoginet (judge), and the Kiptayat ab Kokwet seemed to be the only representatives of a shadowy form of authority. At long last, by attending all the trials I could, and by studying the behaviour of the warriors, I was able to satisfy myself that the Kipsigis have an efficient and centralized form of administration, without which, no doubt, they would never have been able to oust the warlike former occupants of their territory.

TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION. THE GROUP

The "Group" is composed of a number of kokwotinwek³ grouped round a Kiruoginet neo. There is no name in the Kipsigis language to describe this unit, as the expressions Emet, Koret, and Sirtitiet only mean place or country. I am thus obliged to use the English term *group*.

The boundaries of the group are those of the kokwotinwek of which it is composed, and they usually comprise the

¹ Chiefs of the warriors. ² Chief of the kokwet (regulator of beer parties).

³ Kokwotinwek (also Kokotinwek) is the plural form of kokwet.

comparatively large areas of 4-10 or more square miles. This area is ruled by the Kiruogindet neo with his council of elders, and by the chief of the warriors, the Kiptayat neo nebo murennek. Its religious authority is the Poyot ap Tumda. Those three persons are attached to their territory by very stringent rules, which do not allow them to give their advice, to fight¹ or to perform a ceremony, on behalf of any other kokwet than those belonging to their group. The inhabitants of this group are linked together, not only by their common interest in the welfare of their group, but also by the rivalry of their warriors and of those of neighbouring groups, which organize wrestling contests against each other. Each kokwet, as member of the group, sends its elders as deputies to the Kapkuruok council and has, under the presidency of the Kiruogindet neo, a full share in the government of the country.

Each group is independent of its neighbours ; but, when questions interesting a whole district are under discussion, each group is represented by its Kiruogindet neo and its chemengesh at the kapkuruok of all the groups of Peelkut. Those meetings decided important questions, such as war or peace with their Masai and Jalua neighbours, but have been abolished since the coming of British rule.

The group has no capital ; but its meeting place, usually not far from the residence of the Great Judge, is the political centre where all the affairs interesting the kokwotinwek composing it are debated.

KIRUOGINDET NEO

The Kiruogindet neo, or Great Judge, is an exalted Poyot ab Kokwet, and he occupies exactly the same position *vis-à-vis* his kokwotinwek as the Poyot with his temenik. His nomination as chemengesh of the late Kiruogindet with the general consent of his group entitles him to take over office immediately the Kiruogindet neo is dead, or his

¹ During wrestling contests.

retirement through ill health. As the chemengesh can only be a few years younger than the Kiruogindet, there seems very little chance of nepotism in his nomination; but this, in fact, is not so. The Kiruogindet of my group, Arap Terer, who rules over Kapkiam, Kabuloin, and Pinyin, has chosen a very undistinguished person, called Arap Cheriro, as his chemengesh. This is quite remarkable, as Arap Terer is an exceptionally gifted man—the most gifted Kipsigis I ever met. I was soon to understand that a tacit understanding existed between them, under the terms of which Arap Cheriro was bound to nominate Arap Terer's son as chemengesh on his own accession as Great Judge.

When a Kiruogindet neo wants to retire, he addresses his Poysiek during the trial of a case and asks them to let him go, and to accept his chemengesh in his stead, as he is too old, or wants to go and live with a wife established in some other district. When the Kiruogindet is a man well versed in Kipsigis custom, so that the group which is lucky enough to possess him is the envy of all its neighbours, permission is refused. Arap Terer has asked three times during the last four years for permission to retire, but it was each time refused under threat of *chubisiet*, a curse placed on his head, if he disobeyed their orders. This shows that the Kiruogindet neo has no individual authority, but is the mouthpiece of his kapkiruok council. This is composed of all the adult male population of the group; but the opinion of only very few people carries any weight in private trials or the discussion of public affairs. There is first and foremost the Kiruogindet neo, who with his great knowledge usually can sway the assembly and make them see his point of view to the exclusion of any other. Then his chemengesh, who can preside in his absence, and the poysiek ab kokwotinke. These are the select few. Among the people who do not hold any public office, age is the most respected quality, and then private achievements, such as wealth, number of wives, the performance of the



ARAP TERER, KIRUOGINET NEO OF KAPKIAM



The author with the Kiruogindet neo who is surrounded by younger members of his family.
On the left the half blind successor of the Poyot ap Tumda

katunisiet ceremony, and the possession of a domineering personality. One of the most prized gifts ascribed to a man taking part in the kapkiruok is the possession of a colourful speech, full of imagery and figures. The Kiruogindet neo, as president of the kapkiruok council, has two functions to fulfil; he is a Judge and a Governor.

As a Judge he tries all the unfinished cases, heard in the first instance by his Poysiek ab Kokwotinwek, *which have not been followed by mumek* (oath)¹; and directly in the first instance all cases of *Divorce, Murder, and Witchcraft*, all of which are considered of such outstanding importance that the Kiruogindet and his council must be informed at once.²

When the opposite parties in a case are two persons from different groups, their respective Kiruogik neo with their chemengesh must be present at the trial and jointly preside over the meeting.

As a Judge the Kiruogindet cannot try any case outside the boundaries of his group.³ This is a clear and definite rule. Sometimes Judges like Arap Terer, who are famous all over the country, are called to Groups very far away from their own to help the local Kiruogindet, but in that case the Kiruogindet neo of that group must ask him himself, or through the medium of an alamaliet,⁴ to be present at a case. To go uninvited would be to commit an unthinkable breach of etiquette. The delivery of the judgment is followed by the sacrifice of a bull or goat, according to the importance of the case. The elders will eat the animal on the spot, while

¹ When the judge has asked the parties to do mumek and the parties have sworn, there can be no second hearing. The decision is left to powers beyond human control. *Vide* "Law".

² Cases between members of two kokwotinwek of his group are also reported to him directly, as there is no other common authority to hear the case, each Poyot ab Kokwet presiding over the cases of his own Kokwet only.

³ Unless plaintiff and respondent belong to two different groups, in which case the Kiruogindet neo of the respondent will sit with the Kiruogindet neo of the plaintiff and decide the case with him.

⁴ Messenger.

the Kiruogindet neo will carry home with him the hind quarters of the animal and his chemengesh the front legs. This form of reward is called *Kimagutit ab Kipsarurineh* and is the only payment a Kiruogindet receives for the fulfilment of his public functions. To be a Kiruogindet is *not* for the Kipsigis a method of acquiring wealth, but an honorary function, creating a halo of fame and renown round the name of a man.

As a Governor the Kiruogindet rules also with the help of his council, without the approval of which he cannot give any important order. Now that the Kipsigis Reserve is under British administration, his powers are necessarily curtailed, and he tends to assume more and more his judicial functions to the exclusion of all others.

Under the Kiruogindet, and taking his orders from him, is the Kiptayat neo nebo murenek, who is personally responsible for the behaviour of his warriors to the Council and the Great Judge. (The Kiptayat neo nebo murenek has been studied under "War". The activities of the Poyot ab Tumda will be found under "Religion".)

The only external sign of the Kiruogindet's authority is the black tail of the *ingotiat*,¹ which he carries and waves while speaking in the council of elders. From this *saruriat* (tail) is derived his secondary name Kipsaruriat neo, the great tail-waver.

My own group, composed of Kapkiam, Kabuloin, and Pinyin, has been ruled by four Kiruogik neo during the past forty years; Arap Tombo, Keniagos Arap Cherossi, Kipkerich Arap Terer, and Kipsiongo Arap Terer. None of these judges were related to each other, as Arap Tombo and Kipkerich resigned and went to live in another district and had little time to form a chemengesh. As for Arap Cherossi, he lived in Sogo, a kokwet which has now left the Kapkiam group and joined the group of the Kiruogindet of Buchenge, Arap Kipikejn, because the area covered by

¹ An unknown animal, said to resemble a buffalo.

those kokwotinwek was very large and the Kiruogindet found it very difficult to visit them all during the execution of his duties.

The personality of the present Great Judge of this group is an outstanding one. Before British occupation he was the leader of all the Kipsigis warriors of Peelkut, and now he is the most famous Kipsigis judge, his fame spreading to Sot, Puret, and Waldai, where he is often called to help the local Kiruogindet. He has married eight wives and has fifteen married sons, a fact about which he is more proud than of any other achievement. His friendship has been very valuable to me, as the mention of his name has helped in many cases to break down those barriers of hostility with which all foreigners are confronted by this most suspicious and secretive of tribes.

LAW

*General Principles of Kipsigis Law*¹

Under Kipsigis law¹ is included the body of customs which carry with them definite material punishments. Those rules of behaviour and of social etiquette, the infringement of which meets solely with moral disapproval, cannot be included under the category of law. The reprobation of one's fellows is only a stage in the evolution of the moral ideas of a society. If it cannot find expression in some form of public coercion, forcing the individual to fall into step with the other members of his community, this only means that feelings are not sufficiently roused by the transgression to make it necessary for society to express its disapproval of the action in a public manner.

This is not to say that one should assume a rigid attitude of legalism, as by so doing one would unconsciously override the most important cultural factors forming the driving power which is behind the law. The only distinction I wish

¹ Pitet = law, custom.

to make, and it is an important one, is that law is the public expression, in the form of sanctions against the transgressor, of the accepted *optimum minimum* considered as necessary by a certain community, so as to render social life possible. Moral ideas and rules of behaviour generally accepted by a society, but only stigmatized, if transgressed, by moral disapproval, have not reached such a state of universality or of necessity as would have transformed them into law.

What is bad or good is in a great many cases a matter of private opinion ; but the law has been laid down and must be obeyed, irrespective of one's own individual inclinations. Thus, among the Kipsigis, to perform "sach" in such a way as to make probable the pregnancy of the aychet is definitely bad. The elders will shake their heads, the women will be angry, and the warriors will think of the man as of a Don Juan. If he renders the girl pregnant, public opinion will be the same, and even more stressed on both sides ; but the father will have to pay a fine of one goat. What up to now was being hatched in the dark now finds public expression ; the limit has been reached, the man has performed an unsocial action ; let him pay the penalty, let him be fined or beaten. Again, as to wounding and fighting. Two warriors fight, one is severely wounded. There is no public punishment. People will take sides ; some will grumble, others will secretly cheer. The wounded man dies after ten years. An action is immediately brought against his adversary. He has taken a life, he must now pay for it.

That the Kipsigis themselves do not make these distinctions should not prove an argument of any considerable force. If a tribe has no name for incest, it does not follow that the crime does not exist and is not punished ; and it would be asking too much of them to distinguish paralogal categories based on abstractions.

The prosecution, among the Kipsigis, always proceeds

from the individual. There is no such thing¹ as a public action in the interests of society. The community may help by putting a collective curse upon the wrongdoer ; but this only takes place at the instigation of a private person, whose interests have been injured by the actions of the transgressor.

Before a case is submitted to the Kiruogik, all attempts at conciliation must have failed. It is interesting to note here that an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is not a principle of primitive law. When a man has sustained an injury, the offender may come and offer the *nioet-ap-kat*, his ceremonial apologies, begging that his case should not be reported to the Kiruogik, as he is prepared to make compensation, if a delay is granted him. If a *nioet-ap-kat* is repulsed, a man cannot avail himself of this custom ; but if, in spite of this possible handicap, he refuses to accept it, he may bring the case to the Kapkiruok, explaining that he refused the *nioet-ap-kat*, as he had been subjected to extreme provocation. Thus, if a wife commits adultery, the "apologies" of the father are accepted the first time ; but the second or third the husband may refuse, and ask for the return of the marriage cattle.

Kipsigis law is based on precedent, and this makes for the very slow adaptation of the tribe, and of the dicta of its councils, to modern conditions. The judges are old and their judgments sometimes antiquated ; but we shall see from the organization of the court that they have their own way of testing public opinion during the trial, so that their verdict may be a popular one, as this is the aim of the Kipsigis Kiruogindet. To obtain the approval of the crowds of the Kapkiruok and to be hailed as a great judge is the greatest ambition of all the Kipsigis Poysiek, and this they achieve by putting tentative questions, noticing the reactions of the crowd, then using their powers of rhetoric to sway those elders who remain refractory to the point of view of the majority.

¹ Or, at least, it has never come to my knowledge.

The Organization of the Court

We have seen that first the Poyot ab Kokwet, acting as mediator, and then the Kiruogindet neo, are advised of the forthcoming trial by the parties concerned in the case. A suitable day is found, on which everybody meets, about midday, under the shadow of the great tree of the kokwet. The name given to the court (kapkiruok) is extended to this meeting place. Here is the Kiruogindet neo with his chemengesh, the poysiek ab kokwotinwek of the two parties ; or, if they do not live in the same group, the Kiruogindet neo of the second group, if the case is of great importance. Near the judges, and forming a circle, will sit all those who wish to follow the trial, usually the majority of the adult *male* population of the kokwet. Here, as in all discussions concerning public affairs, women are not admitted ; and, if they are required as witnesses, they must sit at a distance from the group of men and depart as soon as they are not wanted any more.

The case is opened by the Poysiek ab Kokwotinwek, who send the accused and the witnesses to sit in the bush, so that they may not hear what is going to follow. They then stand up and, *facing the assembly*, wave their sarurini¹ cow tails,¹ while relating the history of the case under discussion. They are frequently interrupted by the friends of the accused, who stand up for the absent man and try to defend him ; but they are eventually shouted down by the poysiek, who accompany each gesture by a solemn waving of the tail. This representation is very detailed, and each elder explains how everything must have happened, according to his version of the story. They imitate the thief, the murderer, or the adulterer with great skill. The accused and the witnesses² are now called back and cross-examined by the elders and the Chemengesh of the Kiruogindet neo. These poysiek are not supposed to side with any party ;

¹ And not the ingotiat saruriat which is held by the Kiruogindet neo.

² Paoriat.

but they each examine all the possibilities, both favourable and detrimental to the accused. During the trial one can easily distinguish the gradations of respect and esteem in which each member of the kokwet is held. The elders, generally over fifty, who have by now usually been through the eit' a' muget¹ and the ketebi njecheret, are heard in deep silence. Also those people who through their wealth or other achievements are important persons in their village. There are definite class distinctions, as the poor man, the *Kibananiat*, who has not achieved anything remarkable in any walk of life, is soon shouted down and seldom dares to stand up and speak.

The Kiruogindet neo will now stand up and wave the ingotiat for everybody to be silent and listen. He then gives an account of the case, as he understands it, and turns abruptly to his right and left, putting unexpected questions to all those present, so as to test their reactions. He asks for further explanations from the accuser, who, up to now, has been mostly silent. If either of the parties has been able to prove his case to the satisfaction of the elders, the Kiruogindet will pronounce his verdict. After the judgment a bull or a goat is sacrificed, according to the importance of the case, and the entrails examined to see if they are auspicious to the judgment; but here they are not taken very seriously, as I have never heard of a judgment being rescinded on the sole ground of the entrails being inauspicious. The four legs of the animal are taken by the kiruogik as payment of their services and are called *kimagutit*.²

Appeal and Mumek

Kipsigis trials seldom finish in one sitting alone. Endless assemblies sit and discuss the case from all possible angles, but, when the Kiruogindet neo has made his award, the same case cannot be brought up again for discussion.

¹ Ceremony of old age.

² *Vide* p. 182.

Small cases prepared by the elders of the kokwet may finally go to the Kiruogindet for judgment, thus giving the impression of a form of appeal from a minor to a major jurisdiction ; but in reality no such appeal exists, as the poyziek ab kokwet have not in this case pronounced their judgment and the animal of the kimagutit has not been sacrificed. If one party denies strenuously the accusations brought against it, the Kiruogindet neo or the Poyot ab Kokwet may invite the accuser to make " mumek " *pro judicato* to test his belief in the case he is bringing ; but when he is making preparations for taking the oath the judge may stop him and proceed with the case. Once mumek has been made the decision is left to divine justice.

There are many forms of mumek, oath : stepping over a spear, breaking a bow, cutting the cattle's ears, drinking from a dead man's skull, etc. The formula is always the same. " May I die, or be killed like the thing I am breaking, if I am not speaking the truth." It will be remembered from the case cited in " Divorce " that the deep-seated belief in mumek and chubisiet may be followed by immediate and tragic consequences.

FORMS OF PUNISHMENT

Forms of punishment have undergone many changes in the past few years, as a European administration could not very well tolerate the rather drastic way the Kipsigis had of dealing with the wrongdoer. But, even if the death penalty cannot be carried out as of old, the chubisiet curse is said to arrive at the same result.

When a man is an habitual wrongdoer, the kokwet may assemble at a beer-party and curse him. They will not use his name, so as not to bear the responsibility for his death, but will say *ongechuptim*, let us curse the bush, and then proceed to relate the mischief he has been up to, ending with the formula " let him who has been responsible for those mischievous doings die ". Sometimes a crime or a theft

is not discovered ; but a man cannot so easily escape the result of his actions. *Koam tengek*, his sins will find him out. A dramatic incident occurred one day, when they found the paternal uncle of a man living next to me dying and imitating with his mouth the action of chewing. *Koam tengek*, declared the Poyot ab Kokwet, his sins have found him out, the man must have stolen cattle ! He immediately convened all his paternal relations and asked them what they knew about his kimanagan cattle, with the result that they found that twenty years ago the man had cheated a friend by selling one of his cows and presenting him with the skin of one of his own cows which had died. A cow was taken from his kraal and returned to his friend, but it was too late and the old man did not recover.

There are, of course, individual ways of dealing with a man whose conduct is not approved of by the community. Not to be invited to beer-parties is one of the most unpleasant forms of punishment for the culprit. Social ostracism is also marked by the refusal of parents to give their daughters in marriage to a man they dislike ; or to send their wives to work on his fields. Such strong reprobation is only marked after a judgment or the effects of *mumek* or *chubisiet* have shown a man to have been an habitual thief or criminal, as no single action, be it larceny or murder, is punished outside the *kapkiruok*.¹ It is a principle with the Kipsigis that a man must always be given a second chance, and this idea often finds expression in the rulings of the judges.

I would like to give here a description of the rules applying to the most important and frequent cases the Kipsigis *Kiruogik* meet with.

Cattle Cases

The rules of the kimanagan and those concerning the transmission of property are very nearly related ; as cows

¹ If the culprit has ceremonially apologized by doing *niwet ap kat*.

are, or rather were until very recently, the best medium of exchange and a standard of value. Even nowadays, when the Kipsigis can trade their maize crop with the Indians or sell one of their fields before harvest to a fellow Kipsigis, by far the most important and frequent cases are the outcome of some transaction over cattle.

When handing over his cows as kimanagan to a trustworthy friend, the owner does not expect any form of payment or recognition in return ; but he must be informed every time that one of the kimanagan cows or one of their young dies. The skin of the dead animal should immediately be sent to him, not only as a proof of the death, but because it has a comparatively high value of its own. As the kimanagan cattle is herded by a man who must, of necessity, live far away from the owner, several abuses take place.

When the Kiruogindet is confronted with a case of this kind, he will call all the people living near the kraal of the accused and ask them about the names and colour of his cattle and of the dates at which they had young. He cannot ask directly about " the kimanagan cow ", as nobody is supposed to know which cattle are the accused's and which are kimanagan. Before coming to a conclusion, he will ask if the skin of the dead animal has been returned, and at what date. He will then try to correlate the two time factors : the time at which the cow was said to have died and the time when the skin was returned.

Theft of cattle among Kipsigis is of very rare occurrence. Cows have a sacred quality of their own, and a man who steals them from a brother Kipsigis would be stamped as Sogoranet, that is a man having performed an unnatural deed, and would be in the same category as a man committing incest. Indeed, when incest is mentioned, it is taken sometimes laughingly ; but when I spoke of cattle¹ theft as being practised between Kipsigis, the effect would

¹ To the exclusion of goats and sheep.

always be the same, *ne varietur*. My interlocutor would get up, spit as a blessing to ward off the evil of the horror he had heard, shout "sogoranet", making thrusts with his spear or stick, as if he were killing an imaginary evildoer. Although during the whole of my stay I had not come across any case of cattle theft¹ personally, I heard of one in Puret. The thieves were taken to the Government tribunal and thus have escaped the wrath of the elders. Had they been tried by the Kiruogik, the culprits would in olden days have been immediately put to death; but their punishment, nowadays, would have been reduced to that of an ordinary thief.

The common thief (*chorindet*), that is the one whose actions are considered as punishable but not as *sogoranet*, is the person who steals sheep, goats, grain, money, or any other valuables. When found out, he is condemned to pay double the value of what he has taken; but this is very seldom the case, as the thief more often than not steals out of necessity and immediately apologizes in a ritual manner, thus transforming his theft into a forced loan. After he has safely hidden his booty, he makes *nioet ap kat* by bringing, usually at daybreak on the day following his action, a stool, a loynet (*bleeding arrow*), a *kirrerto* (small bow), goat dung mixed with mud from the sweepings of his hut, and a calabash of milk tied with *seretyot* or *senendet*. These objects represent all that a *Kipsigis* holds as most sacred and valuable in this world, and by placing them outside the *mabwai* of the person he has offended, he forces him to accept his apologies. He will then wait in the bush, or send one of his paternal relatives to explain to the owner under what circumstances he has taken his property and promise to repay him at the very first opportunity. The *Kiptayat* of the *kokwet* is then called, and the man repeats his solemn pledge in front of him. He will now only have to return what he has taken when he is in a

¹ Among fellow *Kipsigis*.

position to do so, without paying any supplementary fine.

The *nioet ap kat* will be accepted if the culprit is not an habitual evildoer, as in this case he can be brought to judgment and shown up to the people. But a *nioet ap kat* cannot be refused if the offender is known to be an honourable man.

The fine of double the amount of property a man has stolen is sometimes so heavy that no single individual can shoulder it alone. In this case all his *kot-ap-chi*, and more especially his *mechegeren*, will have to help him¹; but when they had been too often called upon to pay the fines of a relative who was thus disgracing and ruining them, the *imengun* ceremony used to be performed until lately.

During the trial the eldest brother of the culprit would fill a bag with earth and cut it with his sword, or throw leaves² upon the accused, and cast him out of his family by saying "*Imengun*" (Your blood upon you). By this he means that, if this man is killed, his relatives will not ask for compensation, or give him assistance under any circumstances. Immediately after this all his relatives, both paternal and maternal, members of his *oret* (clan)³ and of his *kokwet*, retire, and those who have a grudge against him can put him to death by throwing short pointed sticks at him (*kelache en massigissek*). This action and the execution is called *injjoget* (angry people), and is said to have been discontinued of late years. In its stead the *kokwet* meets, and the *ongechuptim*, cursing the bush, takes place. The effect is said to be the same, as the culprit is said to die very shortly afterwards; and I have come across two cases of people upon whom the "*ongechuptim*"

¹ *Vide* further "Murder".

² Leaves and not grass, which is eaten by the cattle and is a sign of saiset, peace and mercy. Cf. with the cursing of the leopard by his fellow-clansman. *Vide* pp. 173 et seq.

³ And not only of his clan-subdivision.

had been thrown and who died during my stay. The Kipsigis, of course, deny strenuously that they had taken any material part in the death of these people. I feel that they were telling the truth and that the deaths were due to that sense of fear and awe in which the collective curse is held.

Murder

The study of the compensation to be paid for a man's murder throws light on many interesting problems of Kipsigis law. Such questions as those of authority, of family and clan solidarity, of prestige and reciprocity, are better understood when the living concatenation of custom is seen in action.

Murder is quite a unique example of the clan and kot-ap-chi being held jointly responsible for the wrongdoings of one of their members to such an extent that the family of the injured party can confiscate, *pro judicato*, cattle belonging to any clansman of the culprit.

The murder of a Kipsigis, or of a man belonging to a related tribe¹ is called *rumisiet*, and is distinguished from that of a *puniot* (enemy, stranger), which is called *parisiet*. Manslaughter (*lelet*) is on a par with *rumisiet*, as far as the compensation to be paid is concerned, and only differs in the kinder attitude the people will adopt towards an accidental murderer. Death following witchcraft is reckoned as *rumisiet*.

A trial for murder can be initiated by the dead man's relatives, even if he had died ten or even fifteen years² after receiving a wound! The contention of the family is that he would not have died had he not received the wound.

Two cases are to be distinguished according to the clan to which the victim and the murderer belong.

¹ *Vide* "Introduction", p. 2.

² As in a recent case.

A. DEAD MAN AND MURDERER BELONG TO DIFFERENT CLANS ¹(1) *Preliminaries*

When a murder has been committed, the first thought of the offender's family is to prevent reprisals. The murderer's father, or, if he is dead or too old to undertake the journey, the eldest son by his first wife, will undertake to make the formal apology by leading a cow at night time and tying it by the mabwai of the dead man's father. This cow bears the symbolic name of *iringotit* (lit. break spear). If the *iringotit* is not presented at once, the dead man's family may come and seize any cattle belonging to the *oret* of the dead man and keep it until the day of the trial. The interest of this cattle raid to the injured party is that in this way they will be able to collect the best available cattle and choose the pick of them as compensation.

The father or brother of the *rumindet* (murderer) will now go and find the *Kiruogindet neo* in whose group the father of the dead man lives. The *Kiruogindet* and his *chemengesh* immediately call the elders of the *kokwet*, as well as the father and the paternal relatives of the dead man. The Great Judge and the elders explain to them that, now that the *iringotit* has been given, they must not try to take the law into their own hands. The murderer's relatives will then make a statement as to the probable date by which they will have collected the fine. The cattle to be paid by the *rumindet* to the family of the dead men are called *tug' a' muget* (cattle of closing). This payment has been fixed "since as many *ipinwek* as the oldest man can remember" to ten heads of cattle for the murder of a man and nine heads of cattle for that of a woman, also an additional payment of

¹ Not only to a different subdivision (*Kot ap chi*) or *tiondo* (animal), but to another *Oret*. The reason for this, as explained in "Clan", is that the internal divisions of the *Oret* are only recognized and known by its own members. To the rest of the community all the *Tiondo* and *Kot ap chi* subdivisions present a united front and are looked upon as an indivisible unit.

fifty goats for a man and forty goats for a woman. This "compensation" or "cattle of closing" has been fixed once and for all and does not vary with individual circumstances; and even if it is an accident, *or if the man has been killed in self defence*, the same number of tug' a' muget must be paid. There is no discussion over the cattle, but about the goats a good deal of haggling takes place and their number may be reduced; but fifty (and forty) is the normal, and at the same time the maximum number.

For a single individual to pay the tug' a' muget from his own kraal would not only have been very difficult, but also disastrous, as he would have left his family without any milk and they would all have been a burden to their relatives and to the kokwet.

Every single adult male member of one's clan-subdivision, that is, all the Kot-ap-chi, can be asked to subscribe something towards the payment of the tug' a' muget; but first of all the murderer himself will state what he is able to give. He must give as much as possible, otherwise the others will not help him. In most cases, unless a man is exceptionally rich, he will give four or five cows. He will then, with the help of his father and of his eldest brother, go round all his kot-ap-chi to enlist their help. First of all the closest relatives will be called upon, and the degree of affinity is of prime importance. The father, the brothers, also the father's brothers, and the father's brother's children are the first to be asked and, only if they have not been able to pay the remainder of the tug' a' muget, will the other kot-ap-chi be visited. The *ortanyit*, that is, those people who belong to a different subdivision of the same clan, are not called upon to help; as only people who are said to be descended from a common ancestor, and thus belong to the same "family" (kot-ap-chi, people of hut), are asked for their contribution.

The maternal family and the wife's people are not asked to contribute, as they belong to a different clan.

Women who are one's own kot-ap-chi are not asked to

help, with the exception of the widow of a kot-ap-chi who is not living with her kipkondit and who has small children. She is asked for a goat only, as her children are not old enough to have acquired any wealth of their own, apart from what they have inherited from their father and which is held in trust by his widow.

(2) *The Trial*

The two Kiruogik neo of the groups to which both families belong, with their two chemengesh, meet on the appointed day at the Kapkiruok, and round them assemble the elders and the families of the interested parties. The purpose served by the meeting of the judges is to lend a ceremonial background to the handing over of the tug' a' muget; also to assist in the reconciliation of the two families and to help the families to come to an agreement on the number of goats to be paid. These are always about fifty (or forty for a woman), but the number depends on the youth and fatness of the cows of tug' a' muget. Thus the judges are only there to help in minor matters and do not have to adjudicate damages or to punish the culprit.

If the cattle have not been got together, the father, or eldest brother, of the rumindet comes to the middle of the assembly and places a bow in front of the members of the dead man's family, who will keep this bow as a token until the handing over of the tug' a' muget. On the fourth day after the Kiruogindet has received notice that the cattle is ready, the court meets again. When the Kiruogik have heard the complaints of the injured party and the explanations of the murderer's family, they ask them to retire to some distance and agree on a common line of action. They then call them back, and each Kiruogindet speaks, pretending to have at heart the interests of one party. In reality they are trying all the time to reconcile the two points of view.

The Kiruogik now call the bereaved family, asking them

to come to the adjacent kraal, where the cattle of tug' a' muget have been assembled. The brother of the rumindet sits in the kraal with the cattle, and at the entrance sit the elders, so as to frustrate any attempt by members of the dead man's family to seize the cattle. Elders and not warriors, it will be noticed, are used for this purpose as, "if they had been warriors, a fight would have ensued ; but no young man can disobey the words of an elder."

The father of the dead man keeps the *iringotit* cow and is given five goats in addition. Then the widow comes forward and she is given one cow and four goats. If the dead man is unmarried, the widow's share will be taken by the dead man's father's eldest brother.¹ The dead man's brothers also receive their share, which is estimated according to their individual needs, that is, according to the number of marriageable sons who need cattle for the tug' ab koita, payment of the bride-wealth. Another factor to be reckoned is the debts of gratitude of the dead man, as the relatives who have helped him when he was in distress are now given back the equivalent of the gifts made to him during his lifetime. When all the cattle has been divided in this way and only a few goats remain, the judges lead them outside the kraal, and the kot-ap-chi, who have not received anything, must scramble for them. This is called *kesser*. If a man holds a goat by the neck, the others are supposed to let go, as he has secured his prize ; but in reality much fighting takes place.

It is interesting to note that, when the division of cattle by the judges is over, the partition is not finished. Every heifer born to one of his cows is given by the recipient to his brothers and sons, and they do the same, until every single Kot-ap-chi has received a share.

After the distribution by the judges, the kimagutit bull, which serves as the reward of the Kiruogik, is sacrificed and the entrails examined. The kimagutit is taken out of

I.e. the eldest son of the first wife.

the tug' a' muget and is not a supplementary fine imposed on the murderer's family. The Kiruogik will then call round them the Kot-ap-chi of the two parties and, after asking them to open their hands, will put into their outstretched palms grass, on which they will have spat some mayuek, and the two families must now shake hands and be reconciled before they disperse.

Murder of a Married Woman

If the wife has had children, the husband will receive two cows and eight goats, and his "eldest" brother will take the iringotit. The remaining head of cattle are distributed among his family as usual. The woman's family has no share in the tug' a' muget.

If the woman has not had any children, the whole of the tug' a' muget will go to her family, who are under an obligation to return to the husband the whole of the tug' ab koita (bride-wealth). The tug' ab koita, in any case, are returned when the woman dies childless; but, that the husband's family should have no share in the tug' a' muget (which are much more numerous than the tug' ab koita), shows what a real binding force the marriage has after the birth of a child.

Murder Committed by a Woman

If the woman is married, the same procedure is followed as in the case of a man, her husband's kot-ap-chi being held jointly responsible for the loss of a life.

If the girl is still single, a rare case, as they marry immediately after coming out of initiation, no compensation is usually demanded until she marries and bears a child. Not only will her marriage have made her a member of her husband's clan, but the birth of a child will prohibit divorce, and force him and his clan-subdivision to pay the woman's tug' a' muget.

B. THE DEAD MAN AND THE MURDERER BELONG TO THE SAME ORET (CLAN)

In this case no tug' a' muget have to be paid. A man cannot pay for an ortanyit. When a *childless* woman kills her husband, the tug' ab koita will have to be returned; but, if she has had children, nothing is returned by her father, as "if she has boys, they will raise seed to their father; if she has girls, cattle will be given for them".¹

For the first crime of a man there is, according to Kipsigis principles, *no other punishment than the payment of the tug' a' muget*, but, if a man becomes a rumindet for a second time, his family disowns him by performing the imengun, and the injjoget can kill him by the kelache en massigissek, as after theft. Nowadays the collective curse is placed upon him, and the murderer is delivered into the hands of the Government; but his family must always pay the tug' a' muget, even if the rumindet is condemned to hang.

A trial for murder can be initiated by the dead man's relatives, even if he has died ten or fifteen ² years after receiving a wound! The contention of his family is that he would not have died if he had not been wounded, and they have endless arguments about it, until one of the parties is brave enough to make mumek on his point of view and leave the rest to divine justice, as these cases can very seldom be "proved" by the Kiruogindet.

*In a case of assault, when the victim has not died after the encounter, no damages are paid to the aggrieved party; but he must be fed during convalescence.*³

APPENDIX

Some examples of actual cases tried in my presence are given here to illustrate the previous paragraph.

¹ As bride-wealth.

² As in a recent case.

³ Adultery and divorce have been studied under "Marriage" and conception before initiation in "Premarital life".

(a) Cattle Cases

1. Two friends, Arap Rono and Arap Kipikejn, bought a cow with its calf, by giving two bulls and 46s. in exchange. The bulls belonged to Arap Rono, whose property the cow became, and the calf was for Arap Kipikejn. It was decided to leave it for some time with the mother cow, as it was too small to have been weaned. The calf died after some time, and Arap Kipikejn, on being informed by a third party, asked the Kiruogindet of Buchenge to call the elders, as he wanted "to make a case".

When the judges met at Chelele, Arap Kipikejn asked for the next calf to be born by Arap Rono's cow, as he was not informed of the death of his own and the skin had not been transferred to him. The Kiruogindet of Buchenge could not come to a conclusion, as on the one hand it had been demonstrated that the calf of Arap Kipikejn had in truth died and thus that he had no valid claim; but on the other hand Arap Rono had not sent him the skin and called him to eat the meat, so that the case could not be dismissed.

Arap Terer, the Kiruogindet neo of my group, was called in by his colleague of Buchenge and he decided, by quoting a great number of precedents from the Kipkoimet and Kablelach age-sets, that, as the skin of the dead calf had not been returned immediately, and as the owner was not even asked to eat some of its meat, Arap Kipikejn was entitled to have another calf given to him in place of the dead one. To wait, however, until the cow of Arap Rono had another calf would only have meant trouble, so he condemned him to pay the 46s. originally given by Arap Kipikejn for his calf.

2. A very similar case was brought by Arap Sigilai against Arap Kallia, to whom he had given a dark red cow as kimanagan. Arap Kallia himself had a cow similar to it in all respects, and, when one of them died, nobody knew which of the two it was. Some time after Arap Sigilai visited his friend and was informed for the first time of

his cow's death. He summoned the judges, and it was decided that, even if it could not be proved that the surviving red cow was his, the very fact that Arap Kallia had not sent him the skin and asked him to take the meat militated against him. The surviving cow was adjudicated to Arap Sigilai.

3. The following is a case of cattle theft organized in conjunction with a neighbouring tribe. This is of common occurrence nowadays, when no real raids take place between the Kipsigis, the Masai, the Jalu, and the Kisii.

Two Jalu stole five cows from their tribe and met their Kipsigis friends on the Kavirondo-Kipsigis border. The Kipsigis took the cattle and distributed it among their friends through the Reserve, waiting until the affair had been forgotten, so that they could sell them. As it was an intertribal case, the Kipsigis elders could not try this case and it was sent to the Government court.¹

(b) *Witchcraft*

The wife of Arap Tutturri, Poyot ap Tumda of my group, died, and the Poyot himself died three weeks after her. The younger son of Arap Tutturri then brought an accusation of witchcraft against a young woman staying in our kokwet (Kipkoybon). As both parties belonged to the same kokwet, Arap Seuer, the Poyot of Kipkoybon, began the case in the absence of Arap Terer, the Kiruogindet neo, so as to ask him to come only when all the information had been gathered.

Both the woman and her husband appeared and were asked if they were prepared to make mumek, swearing not only that the woman had not bewitched Arap Tutturri and his wife, but that her mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother had not been known as ponindet.² The woman

¹ The punishment was six months and 50s. for every thief, and one month and 30s. for those who kept the cattle for them.

² A witch, a person with an evil eye (*vide* p. 226).

and her husband declared that they were ready to take the oath.

The son of Arap Tutturri was then asked if he was prepared to continue the prosecution, and, when he said he was, a dead man's skull was dramatically produced in the assembly, and he was asked to make the *pro judicato* mumek, that in all conscience he believed this woman to be a ponindet. This had such an effect on him, as he was not at all positive in his accusations, that he fled in terror. I never saw him show his face in the kokwet again until three months after this incident had elapsed.

(c) *Murder*

The following two cases, demonstrating that, even if the death is *lelet*, i.e. accidental, the tug' a' muget must be paid, were not tried in my presence, as I was not able to get there in time, owing to the state of the roads ; but they have been related to me by reliable witnesses.¹

A man heard some noise in his wife's kabungut and went out armed with a spear. He saw two shadows creeping in the grass and, thinking that it was a duiker, plunged his spear into one of them. He was horrified to find that he had killed a little girl of his kokwet, who had been trespassing on his field to steal some maize, a usual piece of childish bravado. In spite of the circumstances he had to give the full compensation of tug' a' muget ; but he was allowed to pay in two instalments.

The second case concerns two close friends whose fields were ravaged by an ant-bear, which kept making holes in their fields. They decided to hide and wait for the animal. When night fell, one of the two men, who were hiding behind two trees, fancying that he had heard a noise, came out of hiding, and his friend, thinking that it was the ant-bear,

¹ I have checked this information since, through two Kiruogik, and it was corroborated in each case.

speared him to death. There again the tug' a' muget was paid in full, as if it had not been lelet but rumisiet.

LAW OF PROPERTY

The study of the rules appertaining to property is important, as from it we learn the methods of acquisition and of the devolution of wealth.

We have seen in "Economics" what is the attitude of the tribe towards land.

To define property as the possession of rights by an individual over certain goods, to the exclusion of all the other members of the tribe, would be misleading. The conscious attitude of the Kipsigis towards this problem is very different. However individualistic a "primitive" man may be, the ties which bind him to his fellows are not only more numerous, but also more stringent, than in our society. For the taxes we pay for our safety and welfare, the Kipsigis substitutes a system of mayuek feasts, of assistance given by the working unit of the kokwet, and also of numerous reciprocal obligations between members of a family, of an age-set and the army-group.

In "Economics" we have seen that it is not possible to speak of individual appropriation of the *land*, but only of possession. A man may cultivate any plot of land, which is not used by any other member of the tribe, either for agricultural purposes or for grazing. The Kipsigis Reserve is so large and so sparsely populated that no friction arises out of the possession of land. In any case, during my whole stay, although I was aware of the problem and made many inquiries in that direction, this was always denied as impossible, and no such case has ever come to my notice or been brought, to my knowledge, before the Administration. A plot which has been cultivated by a man, even when it is lying fallow, cannot be taken from him. Indeed, no one would think of so doing, when there is so much good land, 821 square miles of it.

The produce of the fields is gathered by the household and stored in its own individual tabot and storehouse. It will be used by the husband and the wife for the needs of the family, and we have seen what their individual rights are, according to the field, *imbaret a' mossop*, *imbaret ab soi* or *kapande*, from which the grain had been gathered. The Kipsigis are still a pastoral people, as it is round their cattle that all their ideas of value and of wealth centre. Cattle are for the Kipsigis the ideal, and the only possible equivalent to a savings bank. They can be slowly collected and multiplied with reasonable care, and round them rotates the whole economic and ethical structure of the tribe.

The cattle composing the herd of a man can be grouped under three different categories: cattle acquired through one's own efforts (*pariyuek*), inherited cattle (*tug' ab poyot*), daughter's (or sister's) marriage cattle (*tug' ab koita*).

(a) *The Pariyuek*.—Although my knowledge of Kipsigis is too small to allow of technological analyses of words, I think that an attempt at the explanation of this word should prove interesting. *Par* means to kill, but not when speaking of a Kipsigis, in which case it would be *rum*, but of a member of any enemy tribe. *Iyuek* means mad, and it will be seen in "Religion and Magic" that *ngoriyuek*, "dream of mad," was the name given to the cattle presented to the laibon witch-doctor to reward him for the "dream" in which he had seen and forecast all the major events of the raid against the enemy's cattle. Thus *Pariyuek* might well mean "the cattle captured in war", as this was in olden days the recognized way of starting a herd, and then used to describe all cattle acquired by one's own efforts, ex. gr. those given as a reward to the shepherd, cattle bought for money, etc. Over the *pariyuek* a man has complete control, as long as he keeps them in his own kraal. He can, then, kill them for meat and sell them, provided that he keeps a sufficient number for the needs of his wife and children. It is really difficult to transplant the Roman definition of property,

consisting of *usus*, *fructus* and *abusus*, and to graft it on to Kipsigis custom. About the *usus-fructus* there is not the slightest doubt; but the *abusus* would mean here that, if he so willed, a man could have sold all the cattle of *pariyuek*, or used them for marrying any number of wives. This, in fact, is impracticable. Even if a man wants to become a pure agriculturalist, circumstances would prevent him, as each household needs a certain quantity of milk which cannot be bought,¹ and no one would supply him free if he has voluntarily done away with his cattle. But a man is not free to dispose even of the remaining *pariyuek*, as, according to Kipsigis custom, he must give half of the increase of his cattle as *kimanagan* to his friends. If he wants to evade this rule, he is free to do so, but he will be treated with contempt as a *Kibananiat*, a man of no means, a *Kipmuoket*, a miser.

CATTLE OF MARRIAGE

(b) *The tug' ab koita*.—They are the cattle given to the father by the bridegroom after the marriage to his daughter. The *tug' ab koita* belong to the hut, that is, they are the property of the brothers of the married girl by the same mother. The father keeps them in trust until his sons by that wife grow up. He will then give them a few heads of cattle out of their full sister's bride-wealth, so as to enable each of them to pay his own *tug' ab koita*. The father himself cannot marry with this cattle, or, as the Kipsigis say, “*Magikondo tuga ab lakwengun koi yon koruyie ak lakwengun*”; that is, “You cannot marry with the cattle of your daughter, as that would be like sleeping with your daughter.” The father cannot even sell or slaughter this cattle for meat, with the exception of one bull, whose meat he can sell nowadays, if he is hard pressed, so as to pay his pole-tax. The mother of the

¹ Milk is never sold among Kipsigis.

married girl, if she has no sons, can use her daughter's tug' ab koita to "marry"¹ herself to a girl, so as "to raise seed to her husband". The same restrictions as to freedom of disposal apply to the offspring of this cattle; so that the father has no more rights over them than over the initial cattle of the bride-wealth.

If the father is dead when the girl marries, her full brothers divide the tug' ab koita among themselves. For them there are no restrictions as to their use, and to all intents and purposes they are assimilated to the pariyuek.

The economic independence of the different households of a man is responsible for great inequalities in the distribution of wealth. If, as in the case of Arap Chuma of Kapsaus, a man has two wives, one having three sons and one daughter and the other four daughters and one son, the male child of the second hut will grow up to be very rich and marry many wives with the cattle of his four sisters; whereas the three sons of the first wife will have great difficulty and will have to wait a long time until they are able to marry, as, having only one sister, they must depend on their own efforts to increase their cattle wealth. As we shall see further, they cannot even depend on their father's inheritance, as property is, here again, distributed equally between huts, irrespective of the number of children in each one of them.

DEATH AND INHERITANCE

(c) *The tug' ab poyot*.—When a man is nearing his end and all medicines used to cure him have failed, all his friends and relatives come to see him and sprinkle some water on his forehead and on his breast. This is done "to wake him up", so that when his spirit departs it may remember their good intentions and not come back again to hurt them. His wife or eldest son² will then put a little milk in his mouth,

¹ Katunchi toloch.

² The expression *eldest son* is taken to mean the first son of the first wife, even if he is younger than his half-brothers.

so that "his stomach may not be empty and his spirit be calm".¹ A dying man is said to "have his breath departing" (*kabet kamosset*) or "to have his blood dead" (*kagome agoreti*).

When the man is dead, his wives, who have assembled in his hut, set up the ceremonial *kateiyet*,² wail, *Oú-ó-i-Oú-ó-i*; they tear their dresses, scratch their faces and pull out their hair, and even go out into the bush to try and hang themselves. This show of woe, although usually sincere, must be of such a quality as to impress all those present as well as the husband's spirit, which is still lurking near the corpse, with the deep affection they had for the departed and the terrible loss they have sustained. The first wife is the one whose shrill cry and tragic exhibition of feeling must set the example to all her co-wives, until those present take them by the hand and try to stop them from killing themselves. They work themselves into such apparent frenzy that this sometimes proves dangerous.

The eldest son will now go far from human habitation and choose a deserted spot in the bush. Here he will dig a grave for his father and, returning to the hut, will lift the body and carry it, while the first son of the second wife follows behind him, carrying all the beloved objects of daily use of the deceased, such as his beer-tube, clothes, liquid snuff; also a calabash of milk for use in the next world. These objects are placed in the grave near the body, which is made to lie on its back, with feet outstretched, the right hand under the head and the left hand drawn across the chest and holding the right arm.³

The eldest son now strews the grave with *kipkandolit* grass and bids his father:—

¹ If a man or beast dies with an empty stomach, it is a bad sign for the cattle and the harvest.

² Singular *Katet*.

³ In some clans the corpse is left exposed on a piece of skin, and a small fence is erected round it. A small door is made "for the hyenas to come and eat the man".

"*Wailen komnye setukorijn kurenēt konyo*

"Go to stay safely that may be good the name to come

komnye."
safely."

That is, go now and be calm, as soon you will come back in the kurenēt name that we will give to one of our children. The body is then covered with earth. The contact with the dead body makes the two brothers unclean (*simda*) and they must be paid an indemnity for the risks which the *simda* entails. The eldest brother has the right to pick the best cow of his father's herd, and the first son of the second hut the third best bull.¹ These animals will be known as *chemussit*. The uncleanness of these two men pervades their whole household and the two *chemussit*, so that only they themselves, their wives, and their children can drink the milk or eat the meat of the *chemussit* cattle. If any other *kot-ap-chi* of the deceased drinks the milk or eats the meat of the *chemussit*, they will surely die, and to avoid this danger the *chemussit* are usually given out as *kimanagan*.

When a woman dies, it is her *youngest* son who buries her and is given one *chemussit* by his father; but when a *hibanamiat* (a pauper) who has no sons is nearing death, he is quickly removed by his *kokwet* to the bush, where a small shelter is built for him. Every day food is brought to him by his neighbours; but when he dies, he is left there, as no one will bury a corpse without the *chemussit* price of his uncleanness. During my stay in Kipsigiland one of the oldest settlers happened to die, and all the Europeans volunteered to dig the grave in order to honour their departed friend. The Kipsigis stood at some distance and watched the whole proceeding in amazement. When I returned to my tent they asked me how many *chemussit* the husband had distributed and, on being told that we were given

¹ We shall see further that the largest bull, the *kirgit ab tuga*, is sacrificed, and the second best bull will be taken by the eldest son as *njesiret ab kot*.

nothing, refused to believe it and went over to count the European's herd. As an old man put it, "the chemussit does not wash off the simda, but it helps one to forget it. I would not bury my patajn (best friend) without a chemussit"; and this is characteristic of their whole attitude towards the simda of death.

On his return from the burial the eldest son takes some gum (kigomniet), which he chews, some korossiot grass, and a piece of hippopotamus hide, if there is any available, and throws them on the fire which has been prepared in the hut. This is done to cleanse (kanyin) the hut, as far as possible,¹ of the presence of the dead man.

All the dead man's wives and the two boys already mentioned discard all their ornaments (this action is called kengesser) and turn all their garments inside out (kaliget ab ingoriet), so as to look as wretched as possible. They now shut themselves in the hut for two days and may not emerge from it, or speak to anybody outside, as it is considered that during the first two days the uncleanness of the dead man permeates the whole atmosphere of the hut in which he died and that to be touched by the sons who have come into contact with his body, or the women with whom he had intercourse, may spell death.

For exposing themselves to the dangers which must lurk in that hut, where the oik (spirit) might at any moment return, and for carrying out the ceremonial mourning according to the rules, the first son will take one cow, and the second son a heifer, from the herd of the deceased. They are called tet' ab kaliget ab ingoriet; but they are not subjected to the same rules as the chemussit and no uncleanness is attached to them. Each widow is also rewarded with a heifer, called *chemnjesiret*.

On the third day they all come out from the hut and the eldest son, as a sign of mourning, takes out:—

¹ This is done to make it less dangerous to live in, as the hut will not become really clean before the fourth day.

- (1) The Kimonjogut pole from the roof
- (2) The Rokyet pot impaled in the kimonjogut
- (3) The Toloyta ab itok and toloyta ab injjor.
- (4) The mabwai.

and throws them on the heap of mud and goat dung formed outside the hut by the daily sweepings.¹ For this service the eldest son will take from his father's herd a bull, known as the *njesiret ab kot*.

On this third day the largest bull of the herd, the kirgit ab tuga, is sacrificed at the place where the mabwai had stood, and each member of the dead man's kokwet is entitled to a piece of meat cut from the right side of the bull. This is reserved for the kokwet and no kot-ap-chi may eat it. The left side of the kirgit ab tuga is distributed among the kot-ap-chi²; but no person who is not, at the moment of the father's death, a member of his clan-subdivision may eat this meat. Thus his married daughter and sisters, his maternal family and his wife's family, are excluded from this distribution.

On the fourth day after the man's death, his wives and the two "eldest" sons will go down to the river and wash, so as to cleanse themselves (kanyin) of the simda of the dead man, with which they have so persistently come into contact. A young member of the family follows them to the river with new garments, which they will wear as soon as they emerge. The old clothes are discarded, as having been contaminated by the uncleanness of the mourners. On the return of the party from the river one of the goats of the deceased is sacrificed by an old man, who examines the entrails to see if they are favourable to the ceremony and if the spirit of the dead man is satisfied. The eldest son, followed by the first son of the second wife and by all

¹ Those objects are never reinstated, and the hut remains without kimonjogut, toloyta, etc., as a sign of mourning. From this may be better understood the meaning of the word used to describe the marriage of two women, performed when a woman has had no sons: *katunchi toloch* (she marries man toloyta), that is, "she marries a support for her hut."

² Very few of them attend the ceremony.

the wives, does *keulie*, that is, puts the contents of the goat's stomach on his forehead, stomach, and forearms. A fire will then be lighted outside the hut and labotuet and segutiet thrown in it, so as to raise much smoke. All the belongings of the deceased, garments, ornaments, weapons, etc., are smoked over it (*kiile karik*), so as to cleanse them and to render them fit for further use. The two sons will now shave their heads, and the ceremonial mourning is ended, the other members of the family, even sons and daughters, having taken no active part in the ceremonies.

Before any division of the dead man's property takes place, the eldest son of the first wife takes the two cows (*chemussit* and *tet' ab kaliget ab ingoriet*) and one bull (*njesiret ab kot*), also the honey pot, the large beer pot, loet, and the spear of his father.

The first son of the second wife, or, if the deceased had only one wife, his second son by that wife, takes the cow, *chemussit*, and the heifer, *tet' ab kaliget ab ingoriet*, also his father's shield and sword, and each wife takes the *chemnjesiret*.

This property is usually taken immediately, the above named heirs being privileged not to wait for the slow distribution which is effected over a number of years.

The rest of the dead man's property is divided equally between all his "huts". That is, if a man has thirty head of cattle and three wives, each hut will be allotted ten heads of cattle, irrespective of the number of children in each; but every household must be left with a sufficient number of cattle to support the family. After the death of the father the eldest son of the first wife assumes control of his father's cattle herd, and the cattle are not distributed among the members of the family at once, but progressively, according to each person's needs. The cattle belong exclusively to the sons. The daughters will not be given any cattle, as they will marry, and the cattle must remain in the same clan-subdivision. The widows, with the

exception of the chemnjesiret, will in the end only keep as much cattle as is necessary to support them and the children they may have by their kipkondit, if they go and live with him.

The married sons can claim their share immediately from the elder brother, and the younger boys, as they grow up, are given their cattle, so that they may marry when they have collected the necessary number. The father's property in each hut and the produce of the fields which surround it belong to the members of each household.

These rules, which appear very just, lead, in reality, to great inequalities, as huts with an only son are privileged, and widows with many boys have to wait a long time before they see them married, as they do not have the necessary number of cattle to pay the tug' ab koita.

The father himself, when he feels that he is getting old, calls his sons together and gives them instructions as to the distribution of his cattle. This oral testament is called *kararget*. The father's rights of disposal after death are very limited. He cannot ask his sons to give any cattle to any but a kot-ap-chi, and very few cattle at that, as it is not a Kipsigis custom to distribute one's property after death to any but one's sons. The father in his *kararget* tells his sons not to take all the kimanagan cattle from his friends, "so that they may remember him," and he instructs those who are married to leave a part of their share to their younger brothers, so that the latter may be able to pay the tug' ab koita and marry. The father's wishes are usually followed. It is believed that any disobedience will bring his spirit back and that the death of the young children, and rinderpest among the cattle, of the transgressor will follow it. All questions regarding inheritance are settled among the family and are not brought to the kapkiruok council.

CHAPTER XI

RELIGION AND MAGIC

This, of necessity, is the most difficult chapter and, in many respects, the most incomplete. The approach to these subtle problems necessitates not only an unimpeachable linguistic equipment, but also a very long experience of a tribe as reticent as the Kipsigis. On the other hand, I was very fortunate in the choice of my informants, and able to gain their confidence through assistance given at a time when half of their kin were down with malaria. I was also present at trials for witchcraft and at prayers offered to Asis, and it is mainly through these that I gathered the bulk of my information.

Another element of difficulty was the removal on my arrival of all the *laibon* by the Government and, although these laibon were not really Kipsigis but refugee Masai witchdoctors, their departure must have left a gap which has not yet been filled.

The relations of the Kipsigis with the Divinity, the Spirits, and the Evil Powers of the magician are neither pre-logical nor *solely* based on the deep emotionalism with which the "primitive" is so often credited, when confronted with the unknown. As a human being he is faced with definite problems, the solution of which lies in his personality and in his outlook on life, both of which are slowly built up on personal experience. No doubt from his earliest youth he has learned what the answers of his tribe to those problems are; but here, as amongst ourselves, education begins when the individual is so young that the solution to every question is taught even before the pupil has been faced with the life-size problem. It would be idle to deny that this influences

one's future outlook ; but it is also true to say that, when we are faced with our own problems, the teaching we have received does not seem to apply to them absolutely. Generalities, once reduced to personal standards and applied to private needs, assume an individual flavour which makes it difficult to describe a whole, composed of so many different component parts, under any other title than " accepted standards of Kipsigis religion and magic ".

The Kipsigis, as a rule, ranges religion and magic under two entirely different heads. The actors, the practices, and the aims in each case are entirely different. Religion is universal and practised in full daylight. Everybody can address his prayers to Asis directly or, in collective ceremonies, through the medium of the Poyot ap Tumda. No one, not even the Poyot, possesses any individual power over his fellow beings. The aims of the performance of a religious ceremony or of a prayer can only be the invocation of the Divinity to grant health and plenty. On the contrary the power to practise witchcraft is vested in a particular individual, who may have communication with spirits or send his own double to carry out his orders. The witch-doctor may work evil or good, according to his temperament and the spirits with which he has come into contact. The fact that both religion and magic make appeal to the supernatural does not confuse the Kipsigis, and he considers these two as belonging to different categories.

RELIGION

There is only one God, and he answers to the names of Asis¹ and Chebtelil, or Chebtalil. He is a divinity whose powers increase and decrease with the rising and setting sun. Of every living creature, as well as of all things on earth, it is said that *Kiyae Asis inege*, " he made god alone." Explanations as to his substance vary. A few say that he is the sun, others that he lives in the sun and

¹ Cf. *Asista* = the sun.

exercises control over it ; but most put forward the idea that the sun is the form under which human beings perceive the divinity. This is a very advanced notion indeed.

The powers of Asis seem to be beneficial only. All the unpleasant and tragic events of daily life, rinderpest, failure of the harvest, illness, and death are attributed to spirits (oik) or to a malevolent witchdoctor (ponindet), but there is no antithesis between a good and an evil power in heaven, where Asis is said to reign alone.

Asis can be petitioned any time up to 10 a.m., and when a prayer is addressed to him, the supplicant must be facing East. The prayers are composed on the spur of the moment and conform to individual needs, but the wording follows a definite pattern :—

ex. gr. *Asis konech tuga*
 God give us cattle
 Asis konech winda,
 God give us strength, etc.,
 and end with the word : *kagesai*.
 I have prayed.

There are also collective prayers offered during beer parties for the welfare of the inhabitants. The pattern here is different, as the repetition of the words by the petitioner and its reaffirmation by the assembly adds weight to the formula and forces Asis to listen, ex. gr. :—

Olenjin Koi	<i>burgey</i> ole <i>burgey</i>	<i>burgey</i>
You tell the	people of this hut <i>warm</i> say <i>warm</i>	chor. <i>warm</i>
	<i>Chang</i> lagok	ole <i>chang</i> chor. <i>chang</i> .
	<i>Many</i> children say <i>many</i>	<i>many</i> .

Prayers are also offered during ceremonies through the High Priest of Asis, the Poyot ap Tumda.

Outside every hut, and on the left-hand side as one goes in, is the altar of Asis, the *mabwai*, composed of sticks from four sacred plants (lemeyuet, tebesuet, choruet, sossitiet). In front of this altar are offered libations of beer or milk, and the entrails sacrificed, which will be examined for

auspices. The mabwai is in reality the *εστία* of the hut round which centres the religious life of its inhabitants. Prayers, libations, and sacrifices are offered here to Asis and to Asis alone. No good spirits may be invoked, or evil spirits appeased, by the mabwai.

The will of Asis is ascertained by the examination of the entrails of sacrificed animals. In all ceremonies of initiation and marriage, on the appointment of a new Poyot ap Tumda and following an important judgment, a goat or a bull is sacrificed and its stomach examined. The Haruspex is not necessarily the Poyot ab Tumda: any elder can examine them and give his opinion, as the rules are simple. If the contents of the stomach are such as to indicate *fertility*, the action about to be undertaken will be auspicious.

The animal must lie on its left side, its head just in front of the mabwai and facing East. Immediately after it is killed, its stomach is opened and is declared good if it is:

- (1) Full of food.
- (2) Of a green colour.
- (3) The veins full of blood.

The contents of the stomach are then applied to the head, stomach, arms, and feet, and the remainder stuck at the foot of the mabwai. Rings, called *tamokiet*, are then cut from its skin and worn round the middle finger of the right hand. They can only be discarded on the fourth day¹ and are then hung on the mabwai.

The Poyot ap Tumda

In every group of kokwotinwek, and exercising his function over exactly the same area as the *Kiruogindet neo* and the *Kiptayat neo nebo murenek*, there is a *Poyot ap Tumda* (elder of ceremony). His function is to invoke Asis during all important ceremonies taking place in his group, and to ask him to give Health, Children, and Cattle

¹ This is the rule, but a great many persons are impatient and discard the tamokiet on the second day.

to all those to whom he conveys his blessing by spitting on them the beer he has sipped from his sacred calabash, *komda*. This Poyot has no power of his own, he is only an intermediary between Asis and his people.

The office of Poyot ab Tumda is hereditary, but not the attribute of any particular clan. The Poyot begins teaching his eldest son after the latter has married and is between 30 and 40 years of age; and this teaching goes on right up to the moment of his retirement, at which he hands over the *komda*¹ to his son. But the Poyot cannot assume his functions before he has reached what is, for the Kipsigis, very old age, over 55 or 60; and, as he is sure to die very soon after that,² his son will be too young to assume his functions and will go to another Poyot, who will be his *Konjetindet* (teacher). The eldest son of the Poyot does not necessarily become Poyot ap Tumda in his own group, but may hold office very far away from where his father was.

Every Poyot ap Tumda has a *chemengesh*, who is only a few years younger than himself (and thus not his son). The Chemengesh succeeds the Poyot on his death or retirement. In my own group, Arap Tutturri, who lived in Kipkoybon, died shortly after my arrival and was succeeded by Arap Mongotit, his chemengesh. The eldest son of Arap Tutturri was too young to become Poyot and went to Molo, a great distance away, to be trained by a Poyot who was the friend of his father. The second son of Arap Tutturri had also received instruction from his father, and went to a friend who will serve as *Konjetindet*.

Two months after the death of Arap Tutturri there was officially no Poyot, although all knew that Arap Mongotit had automatically stepped into his master's shoes. During the very first ceremony when his presence was required—it was a *yatet ap oret*—a *mayuek ab Poyot* (beer of the

¹ From the name of this "sacred calabash" the Poyot is also often called Poyot ap Komda, Elder of sacred calabash.

² As very few Kipsigis live to be septuagenarians.

Elder) was given on the previous night and a male goat sacrificed by the assembled elders of the district. The entrails proved auspicious, and from that moment Arap Mongotit was officially known as Poyot ap Tumda. Three months after his accession Arap Mongotit went totally blind and another Poyot had to be found, as he had not taken a chemengesh yet. The younger brother of Arap Mongotit was pointed out by him as his successor, and the elders of the group accepted him. When I left, they were waiting for the *Rotyinotet*¹ to sacrifice the goat and examine the entrails, to find if the new Poyot was agreeable to Asista. This brother of Arap Mongotit is so old that he, also, has practically lost his eyesight.²

The remuneration of the Poyot ap Tumda consists in the gift made to him of the two hind quarters of any animal sacrificed during a ceremony at which his presence has been requested.³ If his Konjetindet has retired in his favour, the new Poyot must share the meat with him, as long as his teacher lives. Beer is also given free to the Poyot ap Tumda during all ceremonies during which his presence is required.

The Poyot, like the Kiruogindet neo, cannot perform any ceremony outside his group, unless he is specially invited to do so by the Poyot ap Tumda of that group. The Poyot, like all Kipsigis, travels up and down the Reserve to visit his wives and relations and, during his absence, he usually asks the Poyot of a neighbouring group to deputize for him in his own. His chemengesh, the man he is training, cannot be delegated in his stead, as it is only after the sacrifice of the goat and the examining of the entrails that a Poyot can spit from the sacred komda and invoke the blessings of Asis on the people. This komda is inherited from one's father and is kept in the family for generations. ✱

¹ First ceremony of initiation.

² The eyesight of most Kipsigis seems to fail completely when they are between 50 and 60 years old.

³ It will be noted that it is the same remuneration as that of the Kiruogindet neo; but the Chemengesh of the latter never has anything to share with his master, when the Kiruogindet retires.

The person of the Poyot ap Tumda is greatly respected, but no supernatural fear is felt, as in the presence of the orgoyot or the ponindet. The Poyot is only an intermediary between Asis and his own fellow men, and Asis can only exercise his powers for the benefit of mankind. At all the ceremonies where I have met with the different Poysiek ap Tumda, I found that they mixed freely with the common people, drank beer with them all night, and shared in the storytelling and the jokes ; and at no moment did one have the impression that they were believed to have more than human powers.

Function of the Poyot ap Tumda

The Poyot must be present at all important ceremonies to invoke the benediction of Asis on the people and their cattle, and to transmit his blessings by spitting beer, which he has sipped from the sacred calabash, Komda. We have already seen him officiating during the Katunisiet, ceremony of marriage, the Ketebi njecheret of the elders, and the Rotyinet, Tienjjinet and Yatet ap Oret initiation ceremonies of *both* sexes. Apart from these ceremonies the Poyot must also give his assistance during *epidemics*, which kill a great number of his people, by performing the *Kipire peek* ceremony for the men and the *Kioi peek* for the women.

Kipire Peek ; Kioi Peek

At about 7 a.m. the warriors discard all their clothes and go down to the river to bathe themselves, and when they are clean, they turn towards the rising sun, take a stone in each hand and beat them together behind their backs four times ; they then throw the stones behind them and also throw some water over their shoulders. They then all rush forwards in an Easterly direction towards the bush, where their clothes have been hidden, dress, and form into *kwanaih* (regiments), each comprising members of only one

puriet. These kwanaik perform their war dance, while kioi peek begins.

All married women take a kerebet (basket) full of peek (eleusine grain), strip and go down to the river. They have their own place here, and it must be different from that of the warriors. The women wash in the river and each takes a stick of the sacred korosiot and plants it in the middle of the river, thus forming a mabwai, and goes round it four times.¹ When this is done, each tries to find a black stone in the river.

All stones found in the bed of the river are said to possess great power against all forms of *simda* (uncleanness), as they have been in contact with the water for so long. Water is, of course, the universal means of cleansing a person from all impurities. Bathing in the river is performed after sexual intercourse (by men only), menstruation, childbirth, murder, contact with a dead body, etc. "See," said Arap Kallia, "we throw dead bodies into the river, they are unclean, everything they touch becomes unclean; but the water no, we drink it, our cattle drink it, no one dies."²

When the women have found their black stone, they put it on top of the peek in the kerebet and, always facing the rising sun, they climb out of the river without ever looking back. An old woman is waiting for them here and, as they come out of the water, she takes off her *koliget* (skin garment) and spreads it on the ground. The women hold their black stone and pour some of their peek on to the *koliget* of the elder³; they then dress and go to the hut where the mayuek ab poyot is being given. The Poyot ap Tumda is sitting here with the elders of the kokwet, and the women kneel all round him, holding in front of them the kerebet

¹ This is an exception to the rule that women repeat everything three times in a ceremony, as four is the men's sacred number.

² But the reason why the stone should be black, I have been unable to discover.

³ I understand that this is a contribution of each household towards the mayuek ab poyot, a small part of which is offered as a libation to Asis.

with the remaining peek and the black stone on the top. The Poyot sips some beer from his sacred komda and spits it on each woman; he then makes the following invocation:—

Olenjin peecheu anyiny ole anyiny chor. *anyiny*
 You tell this water is sweet ¹ say sweet sweet
Olenjin purwechu asta ole asta asta
 You tell these puriet be healthy say healthy ² chor. healthy
Olenjin emet baibai ole baibai
 You tell the country be blessed ³ say be blessed
 chor. *baibai*
 be blessed
Olenjin emet king ole king chor. *king.*
 You tell the country hold fast say hold fast hold fast.

Each woman then goes to her own hut and puts the black stone in her water-pot, where it will always remain. She then takes the peek from her kerebet, mixes it with ordinary peek from her granary, and cooks a meal for her family. During that night no one who has partaken of this meal, made with the peek blessed by the Poyot, may have sexual intercourse.

These ceremonies are usually performed for each kokwet separately, and the Poyot ap Tumda travels about visiting all the kokwotinwek of his group.

This ceremony has not been performed since about 1919, when there was an epidemic of small-pox; not even during my stay, when malaria had carried off a great number of Kipsigis. The Kipsigis ascribed the fact that they could not confine the effects of this epidemic to their inability to perform the Kipire peek and Kioi peek ceremonies, owing to their fear of the Government. The newly enlightened Government "headmen", who are considered as outcasts by their own people, think they will flatter the

¹ *Anyin*, lit. sweet, but here it means "is good and has had cleansing effects".

² *Purwechu asta* = these puriosiek be healthy, is only an approximate translation, as the meaning of *asta* is very slippery.

³ *Baibai*, blessed, happy.

Administration by reporting these inoffensive practices and describing them as activities dangerous to the European settlers living in the farms.

Another important ceremony, which was performed until lately every year after harvest, was the *Röötet*. This is the most important of all Kipsigis ceremonies of Thanksgiving and fertility.

Röötet was performed every year, not only for members of one group, but for a whole district. Thus Peelkut, Waldai, Puret, and Sot had four different röötet.

A large ormarich (like the one depicted in initiation) with mixed cow and goat dung at its foot was built in the early morning, and a mabwai erected by it, and thousands of people gathered round it. The Poyot ap Tumda of the group where the ceremony is performed is standing by the Ormarich. The warriors, in full war-dress and paint, form four kwanaik, composed according to the old custom, so that each includes the members of only one puriet, and go through the Ormarich. As they pass the Poyot ap Tumda, he spits on them beer sipped from his sacred calabash.

About three yards from the Ormarich a hole has been made, into which milk from a cow having had its first calf, milk from a goat pregnant for the first time, and beer made from the grain of the newly gathered harvest have been poured.¹ Round the hole the tug' ab labot fruit has been placed. It signifies fertility and plenty, as it belongs to the commonest shrub of all the Kipsigis Reserve and grows with amazing rapidity. Round this hole stand an old man,² two uninitiated boys, and one spotless white goat. As the warriors pass this group, the youngsters put *sossiot* sticks³ in the mixture and sprinkle the warriors with it.

All those present now kneel down and the Poyot ap

¹ A calabash full of each is brought by *each* *kokuwet* taking part in the ceremony.

² He is not a Poyot ap Tumda. Any elder can occupy this position during Röötet.

³ From the wild palm. They are the same as those used to clean the calabash before milking.

Tumda, facing the sun, addresses to him the following invocation :—

Olenjin purienyon ngobo Kebeni, anan Kipkayge
 You say our puriet if Kebeni, or Kipkayge
anan Kasanet, anan Ngetunyo baibai ole baibai
 or Kasanet, or Ngetunyo be blessed say be blessed
 ch. *baibai*
 be blessed

Olenjin kim ole kim chor. *kim*
 You say be strong say be strong be strong
Olenjin koyum Asis, iyum
 You say we have been created by Asis, you have been created
ole iyum chor. *koyum*
 say you have been created we have been created
Olenjin tegu ole tegu chor. *tegu*
 You say obey (God) say obey obey
Olenjin sere ole sere chor. *sere*
 You say be well say be well be well
Olenjin emone king ole king chor. *king.*
 You say this country hold fast, say hold fast, hold fast.

As the Poyot is saying this prayer, he is holding the white goat next to him by a rope made of the sacred senendet. After he has finished the prayer, the warriors, always accompanied by the goat, go four times round the mabwai. The ceremony is now finished. The old men go to their beers, and the warriors and young girls to the *kambaget*, song and dance. The white goat (cf. with the white bull of saget ap eito) is said to be the opposite of simda and thus to represent cleanliness and health.

MAGIC

The supernatural, for the Kipsigis, is mainly composed of the spirits of the deceased,¹ the *oik*, and of the evil powers of the magician. The spirits, after death, may either become hyenas, or go and live under the earth and emerge, when they find it suitable, to carry on the feuds they had started during their lifetime. There is no paradise and no

¹ Not necessarily his relatives.

hell, and not even a proper reincarnation. We have seen that, when a person dies, his son tells him to go, as he will soon come back again and enter the body of one of his new-born relatives; but this spirit may enter two or three different wombs at the same time. No libations are made to the *oik* in the ordinary course of life, but when they become troublesome they have to be propitiated. When a woman has difficulty in labour, milk is poured on her head and the *oik* of her husband's family are told to be quiet, as a time will come when they will find a womb to enter. When a man is ill, the *oik* will also be accused of having started the trouble and the relatives of the sick man will try to trick them into leaving his body. For this purpose they scatter eleusine grain from the man's bed to the door and then address the *oik* with the following formula:—

Wi inye sichunde chi-chi kosop, oba okwek
 Go thou and leave this man to become better, go yourselves
kogekonok peek. Oiiyo! oba mutyo, orule,
 we have given you the grain. Sorry! you go slowly, you travel,
okwek. Ngo korgo nyo muren omangun
 yourselves. If (you are) a woman or a warrior you get out
kot ko karon ko kagosop.
 till is morrow is in better health.

The *oik* are then said to follow the grain and to depart from the body.

But, if the spirits are particularly malevolent, the services of a magician must be enlisted, so that he may find out what the root of the trouble is; whether it is a spirit, black magic, or a curse cast upon the man.

There are four categories of witchdoctors among the Kipsigis: the *laibon*, the *orgoyot*, the *ponindet*, and the *chebsogeyot*.

The Laibon and the Orgoyot

The famous *laibon* who have recently been deported with their entire families¹ were not Kipsigis witchdoctors, but

¹ Their political activities, for this reason, are not described here.

Masai Oloiboni. Kipsigis tradition tells how a Masai laibon was accused by his people of bringing drought to their land and, to wreak vengeance on him, they stampeded their cattle against him and wiped out all his progeny, with the exception of a small child, who fled with his mother to the Nandi and took refuge there. When he grew up, he became a laibon himself, and one of his descendants came and took up his residence among the Kipsigis. At that time, during the Kipkoimet ipinda over seventy years ago, there was a great Kipsigis Orgoyot in Pureti, named Kabuos; but he also was giving bad advice to his people and was put to death. As Kabuos was the only Kipsigis orgoyot, they were left without any witchdoctor and welcomed the Masai oloibon. The Kipsigis since then have never had an orgoyot of their own, but called the Masai oloibon by both names, that is, laibon *and* orgoyot. All the Kipsigis laibon belonged to the Kapterugut and Kagipsegon subdivisions of the Talaï (Lion) clan. In the other two subdivisions of the Talaï, Kagepuret and Kagiptyek, there was not a single laibon.

The laibon exercised his power through (1) intercourse with the *oih* (spirits); (2) the magic amulets, Kerichek,¹ etc., which he made and sold; (3) his faculty of separating his shadow from his body and bidding it perform the actions he commanded; (4) his dreams foretelling the future.

The laibon had *ngorset*, that is, prophetic dreams, in which the enemy country and the cattle therein appeared to him in a vision. He would then tell the warriors of what he had seen, describing everything with a great wealth of detail, and ask them to raid the enemies. He told them that on the way they would meet with two trees and his "double" would be awaiting them there. There is no name for this double, it is always described as "something like his shadow".

The warriors must now pass through the arch, called

¹ Sing. Kericho, Kerichot.

indassimiet, formed by the trees seen by the laibon in his dream, and from that moment they will be invincible in battle. It is clear that the laibon has here turned the old Kipsigis idea of the Ormarich to serve his own ends. After the battle the warriors must cross this *indassimiet* in the opposite direction, so that the "double" of the laibon may depart from them and return to its master. The laibon received from the warriors as a reward for his help and his prophecy those among the captured cattle whose colour corresponded to those he had seen in his dream. This payment was called *ngoriyuek* (from *ngor* = dream, and *iyuek* = mad. The laibon must have been considered, therefore, either as having an abnormal personality, or as dreaming while in a state of madness). •

Since the death of Kabuos and the ejection of the laibon from the Kipsigis Reserve, there are no laibon or orgoik left. As those were the great exponents of Kipsigis witchcraft, there are only minor witchdoctors left to-day.

The *Ponindet* can be a person of either sex, but is usually a woman suffering from an unhealthy disposition to jealousy (*lomin*). She cannot see anybody healthy or prosperous without immediately wanting to cast a spell (*chubisiet*) upon him. "Even if she wants to be good, she cannot." "If she sees a man being happy, she is jealous and casts a spell; if a child is fat, she casts a spell; if a cow has much milk, she casts a spell. Her eyes are 'bad'." She has an evil eye. Her pet practice is to "throw" foreign bodies like stones, thorns, etc., into the bodies of people and to make them die. The knowledge of these practices is hereditary. If a man is *ponindet*, all his sons will be *ponindet* and, if it is a woman, all her daughters will share the blame. At the trials for witchcraft I was invited to, the first thing to be ascertained against the accused was whether his father or her mother were known as *ponindet* and, if no charge was remembered against the ancestors, the accusation was usually dropped. In earlier days, the *ponindet* was put to

death, but to-day he is made miserable, so as to be forced to leave the district, and a heavy fine is imposed upon him for every misdeed proved against him.

The *Chebsogeyot*, the female witchdoctor, has only curative powers and is employed to counteract the evil influence of the ponindet. If the patient complains of a pain, she rubs that particular spot with butter and recites spells over it, and, during the rubbing, hair, trimmings of nails, stones and other foreign bodies thrust into the body by the ponindet, are said to emerge. Among the powers of the chebsogeyot is that of curing women of their barrenness. Her reward is a calabash of milk for the cure of a child, and of a kerebet of peek for that of an adult. A typical remark made about her, when I inquired if she could use evil powers if she wanted to, was : " How can she do wrong when her payment for curing is so small ? "

The Chemosit

This is a mythical animal, which all Kipsigis agree as having met, but always contradict each other in describing it. Its most commonly accepted characteristics are that it has a body resembling that of the hyena, but much larger and spotted like that of the leopard. It has a white neck and large black marks between eyes and nose. The mouth is very large and red, and the voice, as reproduced for me, is very terrifying indeed, as it closely resembles the explosion of a shell. This animal, which is not only used for frightening children, but is also held in mortal terror by grown-up men, has a special liking for men's brains, as it carries off their heads ; and these are said to be found after some time split in two and empty. When a person thinks that he is near the Chemosit, he refers to it by its *ketet* (nickname), *Chemamsilil* or *Murngelunit*, so that the Chemosit may not know that they are speaking about it. This practice is also followed by Kipsigis big-game hunters, when approaching a dangerous animal, such as an elephant or a leopard.

APPENDIX

Rain Magic

When the Kipsigis inhabited "the country which refused water to men and animals alike", rain magic must have been an important factor in tribal life; but in their present land, to which, according to their traditions, they came over a hundred years ago, the rainfall is so high (91 inches in 1937) that it is more important to prevent rain from falling than to induce it to come! Nevertheless, the elders of the Toiyoi (rain) clan remember the traditions of their family and gave me a description of the practices of their ancestors.

When there was a drought in the country, the elders of the Toiyoi were asked by the elders of the kokwotinwek to perform the rain ceremony. The Toiyoi¹ looked for an ewe, which had never had young and of "nemotiyon" colour. Nemotiyon is said to be "like red and like black" and to resemble the colour of lightning. This sheep, when found, was covered with the lower part of a woman's dress, called sissiot, and taken to the dried-up bed of a river. Here a large hole was dug by the elders of Toiyoi and sticks of sacred korossiot stuck in the middle to imitate a mabwai. This is called *kaphkoross*, and milk, salt, and earth mixed together were put round its base. A virgin girl is now given a korossiot stick, previously soaked in water, and is asked to beat the sheep with it and to drive it four times round the mabwai, while the elders of the Toiyoi, looking up towards the sky, address the following invocation:—

Toiyoi, waiy! kagesain kegonin kechir
Toiyoi, oh you there! we pray to you we give you a sheep
nemotiyon ara irobanjjech ak inye
of nemotiyon colour so that you rain to us and you
amun kogeomnye.
because we are dried up.

¹ Apparently there was no great rain magician for the tribe, but all the elders of the Toiyoi could perform this ceremony.

Ama tamono, ama lakwa, ama poyot
 I not pregnant, I not child, I not elder ¹
Kagerirchin : Inurwech ! kagiriru
 We shout to you : Soften us with water ! we shout
echek, tugul : kasech it !
 we, all of us : Hear us ear !

Toiyoi, to whom the prayer was addressed, is "the place where the water is stored in the heavens". The toiyoi clan's secondary totem, *ilet* = the lightning, and the "nemotiyon" (lightning) colour of the sheep, shows their relation to all phenomena related to rain. But rain magic has not been practised for so long, that I could only learn very little about Toiyoi and could not find out if he was really worshipped as an independent deity, or as a subordinate of Asis.

Nowadays the annual rainfall in the Kipsigis Reserve is so heavy that protective measures are taken against the rain. Whenever a long journey is undertaken, the root of the bamboo is stuck in one's hair, the end pointing upwards. This is said to prevent rain from falling and, whenever black clouds gather and it thunders ominously, the bamboo root is taken out and waved frantically towards the sky, as the clouds are said to be afraid of the bamboo. During this action the practitioner ² does not utter a single word.

Strange as it may seem, whenever a man with a bamboo root accompanied me on my trips I never arrived at my destination, drenched to the skin as usual, but perfectly dry ; as we never met with rain on our way. While I was sitting in my tent one afternoon, and the clouds were gathering, a friend with a bamboo root walked up and waved it all round us. The clouds burst and the rain came down with tropical violence, but not a drop round us ; it had stopped 100 yards away. It is these strange coincidences which, for both "primitive" and civilized, give the necessary equation between cause and effect, on which beliefs are founded.

¹ I.e. not only the virgin, the child and the elders, but all of us appeal to you.

² Who need not belong to the Toiyoi clan.

CHAPTER XII

MYTHS, STORIES, AND SONGS

Apart from love-making, hunting, and, until lately, going to the wars, the Kipsigis finds relaxation in the telling of stories and in singing.

The myths are better known to the old men and are usually told during beer-parties before an admiring audience. They are told time after time in exactly the same fashion, practically the same words being used on each occasion. They describe the migrations of the Kipsigis and their first fights with the Masai and the Sirikwa, the origin of their social divisions, etc. The only myth which seems to have some historical value is the one relating the adventures of the Kipsigis when they left the country of Ttó. All the place-names used in this myth exist nowadays and are revered by the Kipsigis as connected with their origins.

The stories are usually rather ribald and crude, and they have good reason to be so, as they are often composed exclusively for the sweetheart's consumption and are very erotic. Their morality is rather Rabelaisian and one is forcibly reminded of his Panurge; but here also there are exceptions, as in the delightful story of the mother baboon and of the human mother.

The songs are accompanied on a four- or five-stringed lute (kipugandet)¹ and are usually sung by men. They praise the beauties and gallantries of love, the great deeds of Kipsigis warriors, the peacefulness of the countryside, and the beauties of a man's village. The men deride with great cynicism the failings of human nature and especially of womankind, described as "the enemy of mankind"²—a

¹ There is also an 8-string instrument called ketuba.

² pp. 248-9.

very Schopenhauerish attitude ! There are also initiation songs, in which the girl promises her sweetheart to bear herself bravely during circumcision and not to betray his trust ; but she asks him not to be tormented with his desire for her and to sleep with other girls, so as to have his mind at peace, that he may be able to collect the tug' ab koita for her bride-wealth.

The singer, always a tenor, reaches some very high notes, and is often accompanied by a chorus, when singing during a beer party. The erotic songs are only sung when in the presence of the sweetheart, in the singroina, or when herding the cattle ; but the most common occasion for a singer to show his art is during a Kambaget dance, which follows some such joyful occasion as the rotyinotet festivals or the gathering of harvest.

The myths, stories, and songs which are quoted in this work have been chosen from my notes as the most representative of their kind. Mr. Orchardson's dictionary (MS.) proved invaluable in the translation. For immense help in the translation I am also indebted to my friend Arap Chuma. It will be noticed that the translation is a literal one ; whenever a phrase does not make any sense in English, I have added a footnote. The spelling is sometimes phonetical and inconsistent, for this I beg to be excused.

Note.—The Kipsigis text accompanies the English translation for the better understanding of Kipsigis thought and does not purpose to be an authoritative version of the language.

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MYTHS

THE ORIGIN OF THE KIPSIGIS

" *Kin kou piik en Tto* "

" WHEN MOVED HITHER PEOPLE OF TTO "

Yekin kou piik en emet ab Tto
 When moved hither the people of country of Tto
Kogimakeguren Kipsigis, kigikuren Mnyot. Asi
 they were not called Kipsigis, they were called Mnyot. Then
kobwa kot koit tulu ap Kipsigis Komeng'is en
 they came till they reached mountain of Kipsigis they remained at
tuluonoton kenyisich chematian kopcheiyo. Agokingobwone
 that hill years which few they separated. But when they were
en emet ab Tto ko kipiik somok, Nandindet
 coming from country of Tto are the people three, the one Nandi
ak Keyot ak Kipsigisindet. Kogibwa ngomi
 and one Elgeyo and the one Kipsigis. They went when arrived
"Ngejn bo Sowe" kobesyo, kwo Nandindet koit
 "Saltlick of Sowe" they separated, goes one Nandi reach
"Kapkeben", konyo Kipsigisindet koit "Tulu ap
 "Kapkeben", came the one Kipsigis reach "Mountain of
Kipsigis" komengis en tuluonoton kenyisiek chemachang,
 Kipsigis" he lives in that mountain years which not many,
kotun koba kou Kipsigisiek Mosore
 and on a day they go moved Kipsigis people (to) Mosore ¹
komengis kogejn, asi kongetyo (en) Mosore kowa koba
 they stayed again, then they left (at) Mosore moved to go
Chelemey komengis kogejn, asitun kongetyo
 Chelerney ¹ they dwelled again, then one day they woke up
koba tulu ap Pureli komengis en yoton kenyisiek
 went mountain of Pureti ¹ they lived in there the years
tutigin kow kogeny koba kot koit Suswot komengis
 few move again they went till reach Suswot ¹ they dwell

¹ The name of the countries they crossed indicates that they were coming from the North and moving towards the South.

en yoton kogagee mising kototun koiyyo Kipsigis kot
 in there stay for long very much until were both the Kipsigis till
kochang'a. Konaam anyun paret ab kee ak
 came many.¹ They start very much fighting of their own and
Masaek ak Kosobek ak Limek, kobarge ak
 Masai people and Kisii people and Jaluo people, they fight and
Kolosyo Masaek en kenysisiek chechang', kototun
 they win the Masai² in years many, until the
konget Kablelach kobarge ak Masaek
 day came out (of initiation) Kablelach³ they fight and Masai
kot komweiyio Masaek.
 people till they run away Masai people.

Ingap kagowe Masaek kochanga anyun
 When they pursue the Masai became many very much
Kipsigisiek. Konaam kobarge ak Kosobek ak Limek
 the Kipsigis people. They start to fight and Kisii and Jaluo
Kogejn kowo tugul, kosie tuga chechang' che
 tribes again they pursue all, they get cattle many which
kiporu en lusiek tugul. Koparait anyun
 they capture in the wars all. Became wide very
emoni ap Kipsigis kot amun kikowo
 much country of Kipsigis indeed because they have vanquished
punik tugul.
 enemies all.

Pesyet ab Oret ak Puriet

DIVISION OF CLAN AND PURIET ⁴

En kejn kingota komenye Kipsigisiek ulin bo
 In years ago they were still living Kipsigis there in

¹ They stayed here for very long until they multiplied. They then attacked the strong neighbouring tribes.

² And the Masai were victorious.

³ The Kablelach age-set.

⁴ This myth is important as it shows the beliefs of the Kipsigis about the division of a single family into many *Puriosiek*. It is a very naive story of how the meat of the *ei'* a *Muget* ceremony of old age had to be divided between the *Puriosiek*—even before they had been created.

timiin olikiguren "Koyywo" kotomo komang'
the forest, the place called "Koyywo" not yet to come out
emet ne paraa kogimakomi Puriet ak Oret amun
country which wide¹ there was no Puriet and Clan because
piik tugulko' kitupcho ago kwandanywan ko agenge.
people all are brothers and then their father is one.

Asi kobesio Puriet ak Oret ko kilomo kochang'a
Why is divided Puriet and Clan is was not yet to come many
piik. Konget poyot neo konem eito koejn
the people.² He got up the old man great³ took out ox
koik "Eito ab Muget" keyejn, ingap kaenyak kesach
to flay to be "Ox of Muget"⁴ is sacrificed, when he flayed he
panyek tugul ak kigochi age tugul pendanyin,
divided the meat all and gave it to everyone his meat,
ko en "eito ab Muget" komi pendo ne maame
and in "Ox of Muget" there is a piece of meat which not eaten by
Oret, ago magesyinge panyek ab "Eito ab Muget".
Clan, and when not finished to them the meat of "Ox of Muget".
Oranak kityo milen pendo ab Puriet, ko kimakomi Puriet.
One clan only there is a meat of Puriet, but there was no Puriet.⁵
Konget poyot kokway piik alak cheba Oret, koik
Wake old man he chose people some belong clan, to become
Puriet asi koip pendanywan. Ko kibesienyon,
Puriet then to take their meat. So was divided from these,
kobiit, Puriet ak Oret en Kipsigis ak kora.
is founded Puriet and Clan in Kipsigis and now.

THE ORIGIN OF CATTLE

Kejn kogimagotinye Kipsigis tuga ago kimakongen
Years ago they did not have the Kipsigis cattle and did not

¹ This is in accordance with the Kipsigis tradition that when the tribe was very small they had to hide in the forest from which they issued and fought their enemies when they became numerically stronger.

² As the Kipsigis were very few there was no reason why they should be divided into clans and puriosiek.

³ The head of the family.

⁴ A ceremony of old age.

⁵ In the *Eit' a' Muget* ceremony certain pieces of meat must be given to different clans and puriosiek—but here as they were not divided yet, they had nobody to give them to.

kole teta ko ne. Ko kimii chii ne kimenye yenegit ak
 know say cow is what. There was man who lived near and
araraita, ko en kipchulyo kogere tugun chebwone
 the lake, is in every day he saw things which were coming out
ak koagelos en tuita ab araraita ago en karon
 and grazing at the edge of the lake and then in morning
ngoyech emet kowekse kobendi pek orit ak
 when daylight in the country they returned to go water inside and
moekwak ago ngwo chichoto korikyi
 their calves and then if go that man near them
komaruaye, koagelos kityo. Kototun kole chito
 they do not run away, they graze only. Until said the man
"Alyone si anam asi mawek kogejn
 "What shall I do that I catch and then they do not go back again
ab araraita?" Konget chito kongot piut ak konde
 inside of lake?" He got up the man he fenced kraal and he put
ormarichok ayeng, age ko kalit araraita ak age ko kalit
 the gates two, another is faced the lake and another is faced
koger kaa, ak koger ormarichok tugul kotatum kobityo suswek
 to see home, and he shut the gates all until it grows the grass
kot komekotogu ormarichok, konget kemoi koyat ormarichet
 till cannot be seen the gates, he wake night opened the gate
ne kager araraita ak koger ne kager kaa. En kemoi
 which faced the lake and he shut which faced home. At night
kobwa tuga en araraita, koagelan kot koba kuchut orit
 came the cattle in the lake, they grazed till go to enter inside
ab piut, konyo chito koger ormarich ak korip kot koyech
 of kraal, came the man he shut the gate and watched till come day
emet, ingap koyech emet koyat ormarichet ne
 country, when became day the world he opened the gate which
kager kaa koyot tuga koget koba kaa. Yeitiita
 faced home drive out cattle he drives to go home. When reached
kaa tuchaton kooua piik kole koronon tuga inne
 home those cattle seen by people say good the cattle very
amun tinye chego chechang. Kongetyo piik tugul
 much because have milk much. Wakes the people all
kongot piusiek, ko chito ne mangot kosome age tugul
 fenced kraals, and man who not fence he prays any all who
nekigangot ko mamuche toyete age amun bo taunet
 had fenced is can't refuse any because is of beginning

ngalechu. Kubit kochanga tuga en emet Kipsigis
these words.¹ Multiply many cattle in country of Kipsigis
ak kora.
and even now.

THE ORIGIN OF GOATS

En kejn ko kinget chito ak kanyin ak lakwet
In years ago they got up a man and his wife and a child
patai, ago kimwe amun kimii rubet
on her back, and they run away because there was hunger in
emet ab Kipsigis, ne o got. Komonor koba
the country of Kipsigis, which big indeed. They went on their way
ago mangel olebendi ago kimagomuche
and then do not know where they are going then she could not
kanyin kochakta amun kikeseni lakwet. Kolenji
his wife go quickly because she carried the child. Tell her
manongotyot: "Nyone mutyo Kawendanu, ago
the husband: "Follow slowly I am going on, and when
yeitu sachoran iger; oret nekager
you arrive at the cross-road look; the way which I shut²
komatiwe, iwe nemager." *Kwo chito kot koit*
don't go, go which I did not shut." Goes the man till reach
sachoranik, koger nigawo komager
cross-roads, he shuts the road he followed not shut that on
nemawo. Konyo kiot yoton kanyin koger oret
which he did not go.³ Came reach there his wife she saw the way
ne magerat koosip noton kole "awendi nilon
which is not shut she follows that saying "I am going this (way)
amun yalat ago nilon nekamwowa murennyun."
because is opened and is this which told me my husband."
Kopun noton kwo kot koik langat mache koimen.
She passes that she goes till become evening nearly night.
Kobwat kole, "arue ano amun koimen
She thinks saying, "I sleep where because it come

¹ He could not refuse to give because these things were happening in the beginning of the world—i.e. when everybody was good and kind.

² A stick is put on the road as a sign not to go that way.

³ That is, he tricked her.

emet ? " Kogus kong koger kebenet, kole
 night country ? " She looks over she sees a cave, she said,
 " Arue yuton." Kwo orit ab kebanet
 " I will sleep here." She went inside of the cave
 oletyechotyeche nego. Kole " Nechu tyeché
 which is trodden down by goats. She said, " What is this walked
 oliton ? " Kotebi orit nematyana kobwa nego. Kokwong
 here ? " She stays inside little time come the goats. She was
 kwondo agosisige kityo. Kochut nego orit
 surprised the woman and kept quiet only. Entered the goats
 ab kebenet ago maiyuei nego kwondo.
 inside of the cave and then not afraid the goats of woman.
 Ko mayuei ak ine kwondo ap nego. Koru
 And not afraid and she the woman of the goats. They
 tugul kebenet. Kotebi tugul kebenet egosiek
 sleep together in the cave. They stay all (in) the cave days
 che machang, kobe kwondo " amache agel nechu
 which not many, said the woman " I want to drive these goats
 koba kaa koik chechuk, amun tinye chego, asi agechin
 to go home to become mine, because they have milk, then I may milk
 lakwet chego ak komekomuche kobarech rubet."
 for child the milk and will be unable to destroy us the hunger."
 Konget en yoton, kogey chego kogachi lakwet
 She drove in there, milked the milk she gave to the child
 kole, " inasua ugot komame lakwenyun anay ale
 said, " let me see if not dead my child I may know that not
 mayachen chego." Kogochi lakwet chego, Komame en petusiek
 bad the milk."¹ She gave the child milk, did not die at days
 somok, kolu ak ine en petut ab angwan kogas ; koanyiny
 three, drunk also she in day of four² she thought ; it is sweet
 kot. Koru ngo yech emet, koonam panda kopoto
 indeed. She slept till come day country, they start to go with
 nego tugul, koget kot koit ga. Ingap kailita ga,
 goats all, driving till arrived home. When they arrived home,
 koger piik kogetu nego, kelebek, kele :
 they see the people driving goats, they asked, saying :
 " nechu iketun ? " Kolenji " togukyuk
 " What is this you are driving hither ? " She said, " my things

¹ It is rather surprising, for one who knows the love of Kipsigis women for their children, that the mother of this story should first try the effects of the milk on her offspring. ² She drank herself on the fourth day.

che kiasiche en timiin, ago, amun kiager
 which I got in the forest, and then, because I saw
kotoloen, ak kolenye chego che onyin. Ole
 that they were good, and they had milk which is sweet. I said
mnye aket, kola ga asi akechin
 good I drove (them) to go home and then I milked them
lakwenyun simame en rubet."
 for my child not dead in hunger."

Kotebi egosiek tutigin koger piik, kolle
 She stays days few they see the people, they say
"nemnyachen nego." Kosum ak ichek asi
 "they are good the goats." They beg her and they (also) that
kolue chego. Kogochi age somok age ayeng,
 they may drink milk. She gave another three another two
koyiote nego akichek kotagay kochanga
 were bearing the goats also themselves until became many
nego en emet ab Kipsigis. Kitinye nego ngunon
 goats in the country of Kipsigis. They have goats even now
en Kipsigis tugul.
 in (the) Kipsigis all.

Yeboch.

End.

THE ORIGIN OF THE PRACTICE OF BLOOD DRINKING

En kejn ko kimakongen Kipsigis kole kie korotik
 In years ago they did not know the Kipsigis say we drank blood
ana kitestoo ingwek asi kyamnda kimoik. Amun en
 or is added (to) vegetables then eat with food.¹ Because in
rubet ne o nekinii Kipsigis ko kiame piik itik ab tuga
 hunger which big it was Kipsigis is ate the people ears of cattle
ak kosaptos tuga. En pesiet age koger chilo lagokyik ko
 and they live the cattle.² In day another look a man his children
kageski en rubet ago kamakobek tuga ak nego en yenget,
 is finished in hunger then nearly finish cattle and goat in flaying.³
Konam eito koejn ngap kagerer kotumgee korotik, koryok
 He take the ox he kills it when cuts pours out the blood, he jumps

¹ The Kipsigis of old did not know that the cattle's blood could be either cooked with vegetables or drank raw.

² During a great famine in order not to kill their cows they ate their ears.

³ He was killing (flaying) all his cattle so that they were nearly finished.

lakwet ne kaygay koguldechi korotik, konam kwanda ak
 the child who is bigger he drank the blood, take him his father
kowokta korir Lakwet ak kole "Pagachan ae amun
 and pushed him cry the child and say, "Let me drink because
anyiny kot ago purgeen." *Kagas lagok koba koe*
 sweet very much and then is hot." Heard by children they
korotik tugul kot kobiyyose tugul.
 came drink blood all till they satisfied all.

Kolene piik pegu lagok en korotik amun toma
 Saying the people will dead children in blood because we
kegose kele kie korotik. Kole kwandanywan "Agere
 never heard to say is drunk blood. Said their father, "I will
kot koit karon an tomabek ko mayach korotik." *Koruiyo*
 see till reach to-morrow if not die is not bad the blood." Sleep
lagok kot koech karon ago baibai tugul.
 the children till become day to-morrow there is pleased all.¹

Kole ara alyone asi asiche korotik ama aeny
 He say well what will I do and then I get the blood not flay
artet anan teta. Kolenji kanyin en karon konon rotwet
 the goat or cow. He told his wife at morning give me knife
ak inyon inomwon artani amache atil kebet
 and you come take for me this goat I want cut the vein
kobwa korotik. Kotil kebet artet kosurergee
 may come the blood. He cut the vein (of) the goat rushes out
korotik, kitigin kobare kochunda artet, kwo artet kitigin
 blood, little lime wants to leave off the goat, goes the goat little
kobut ngwony komone. Ko tun karon koyay chilo kiy ne
 fell down dead. Then to-morrow morning he do man thing which
u kipchabet ne mingin ak kogur kanyin kolenji "nyon
 as the arrow which small and he calls his wife tell her, "come
namwone artani amwok kebet," Komwok kebet ab artet
 hold for me this goat I shoot vein," he shot vein of goat
kochagorer korotik kitigin kochunda kwo artet kwaget, konam
 rush out blood little time he leave off goes the goat to graze, he
ingo koborchi kyilon ko maam kiy. Tun pesiet konam
 takes another do same that is not hurt by thing. Then one day he
korotik kotesta ingwek ko anyinyilu kot, kwamda
 took blood mixed with vegetables is come sweet indeed, ate
lagok kimoik en kimchulyo amaame kiy. Kogeskee
 with children the food in everyday not hurt (by) thing. Finished

¹ The next day everybody was well.

tuga ab piik alak kotokomii chechik. Kole piik tugul "Ame cattle of people other was left his. Say the people all, "Eat ne lagok ab chichi asi mabek?" Kobwa piik koteben what children of this man then not dead?" Came the people ask kolenji "ame korotik ak ingwek," koteben piik him, he said, "I eat blood and vegetables," ask him the kole "isigen ano korotik?" Kolenji "ani nego people said, "you get where the blood?" He said, "from goats ak tuga." Kelenji "inetch ak echeh." Koborchi piik and cattle." They said "teach us and ourselves."¹ He shows the olikichorto tela ak artet. Konay piik people how to shoot the cattle and goat. They know the kole "anyin korotik," ak konay ole richorto. people say, "sweet the blood," and they know how to shoot. Konay Kipsigis kole kyome korotik koboch yoton, ak kosopcho They know Kipsigis that is eaten the blood from then, and become piik che chang' en emet. more healthy people than many in country.

Yeboch.

End.

STORIES

ULYSSES

En kejn kogimii chilo Kipsigis nenyogor ago In years ago there was a man Kipsigis who coward but he kingom. Tun kolenji kanyin en pesiet age "amache aset was clever. Then he told his wife some day, "I want to go luget amun kuronon pik kimnyogoriet, ko ngunon to war because calling me people the coward man, it is time ko kawe." Konam longet ak ngolit ak rotuet ab chok, kolenji I go." He took a shield and a spear and knife of sheath,² he tells kanyin "saisere kowe." his wife, "farewell, I am going."

Kwo kot koit emet ab Masaek horu en We went till he reached the country of Masai he slept in

¹ That we may learn also.

² Sword.

timdo. *Kemoi konget koyot tuga chechang*
the bush. At night he woke up opened Kraal of cattle many
koget en koron kagoech, konai chichoton,
he drove out in the morning it became day, he knew that man,
kole "kwone punik en letunyun," *Kole "Ayae*
he said, "Coming the enemy in my behind," he said, "Shall

ne ? " *Koyep subenet ne o ak koyai kou ketit*
I do what ? " He cut a log which big and do it same as wood
ab it ak koil en mwaita ak konde ingariet ak konde
of ear¹ and put in fat and painted with red earth and put on

oret parak. *Kobwa Masaek koger ketit ab it en oret*
the road above.² Came the Masai they see wood of ear on the way
parak, kokurge punik kosua ketit ab it, kole :
above, they assemble the enemies to see wood of ear, they say :

" *Keti ko mabo Kipsigis amun wo ko*
" This wood is not of Kipsigis people because big is
makipsigisiek pichu. " *Kobagach punik ketit ab it*
not of Kipsigis these people." Left the enemies wood of ear

en ngwong, kosip oret ab chichoton. Kwo ak ine
on the road, they follow way of that man. He went and himself

chito ak kogeke tuga, kwo kolany ketit parak, kotil
the man and driving cattle,³ he went to climb a tree up, he cut
simamik ak kobach en oret parak koget ine tuga.
dry twigs and left on the road above⁴ he drives himself the cattle.

Koit yoton punik Koger simamik en ngwong ak
Arrive there enemies they see the dry twigs on the ground and
konyal parak Koger ingoriok en sagek ab ketit. Kole punik
they look up see red earth in leaves of trees.⁵ They say the enemies

" *Yechen pichu, mogere ingoriok en sagek*
" They are big these people, don't you see the red earth on leaves
parak ii ? " " *Ongewegen* " *kole alage, "ongotogisip ole*
up ? " " Let us go back " say some, " let us follow on where

kaba, " *kole alage, Achicha ! Kowak punik alage,*
they go," say the others, No ! They return enemies some,
kosip alak. Koget ine chilo tuga kot konyor"

they follow the others. Driving himself the man cattle till he met

¹ Piece of wood worn in a hole made in the lobe of the ear.

² Road above, i.e. on the road behind him.

³ The man was going, driving the cattle in front of him.

⁴ Behind him.

⁵ Red earth from the hair of the warrior.

laluēt. Konam longet Korabagaten ngwejn.
 burned grass. He took a shield cut it (and put it) down.
Kobwa koit yoton punik kole, "mogere"
 They went reached there enemies they say, "don't you
kwiosik ab pichuton?" Kowek punik.
 see the shoes of those people? " They turned back the enemies.
Koget ine kipnyogoriet tuga koik mogoriet
 Drove himself the coward man the cattle became rich man
ne o got kosir pik tugul. Ko matagai kogure che
 which big indeed than people all. He is never again to be
age tugul kipnyogoriet. Keguren mogoriet
 called by anybody the coward man. He is called the rich man
kotagay.
 every day.

Yeboch.
 End.

ULYSSES II

Kimii chito en kejn nekiguren Kogi ago
 There was a man in years ago who was called Kogi and then
kingom ak kigorum kot. Amun kitinye Kipsigis
 was clever and was cruel indeed. Because they had Kipsigis
nyalilda neo akobo Masaek kibogu, Masaek. en
 trouble which big because of Masai people, was coming the Masai at
kipchulyo kobokobare Kipsigisie ak kogete tuga
 all days came to fight with the Kipsigis and to drive off the cattle.
En pesiet age kogur piik tugul Kogi kolenji "Amache"
 In day another he called people all Kogi tell them "I want
koset luget kebe kebage ak Masaek." Kooyan piik
 to go the army to go to fight with Masai people." Agreed people
tugul amun kingen kele korom ago ngom. Konget
 all because they knew they say cruel and then clever.¹ Wake
Kogi konam luget ab piik konom kityo. Koba angotagobendii
 Kogi took army of people fifty only. They went while they were

¹ They knew that Kogi was cruel (brave) and clever.

koger iyet en timdo parak. Kolenji piik
 going on they look smoke in bush above. He tells the people
Kogi, "Ogere iyonim ii?" Kole piik "ee"; Kolenji
 Kogi, "You see that smoke?" Said people "Yes"; he tells them
"Angen ale Masaek choton." Koteben Kogi piik
 "I know that Masai people those are." Asked Kogi the people
kolenji "Ara kilyone ngunon?" Kolenji
 tell him "Well what are we going to do now?" He said
"okasoo amache keyai ngomnot ak ongeyai ho uu
 "You do what I say, I want we do clever and let us do same
yon amwowok. Kibendi tuluoni, tobeni Masaek
 that I told you. We will go this hill, looked by Masai people
asi kelajn ak kochortaige kou noton kototen, si kole
 then climb and coming down same as that every time and said
*Masaek kii piik ab kwanet neo koiyweyi si korway".*¹
 Masai was people of file big may fear then run away".
Koyan piik tugul ngalek ab Kogi. Koba kolajn tulwonoton
 Doing people all words of the Kogi. Went to climb that hill
ak kochoruge kotogor komache koimen. Kole
 and to come down and so on wanted² to be night. Say the
Masaek "mnyano pichu choruneengee tuluonin a'ogora
 Masai "where this people coming down from that hill every time
kochorchin ke timi, kakoik luget ne o got,
 climbing down this bush, has become army which big indeed,
yegor yetuiyo tugul kobwone kobarech kityo." Kongetyo
 when they join all will come to kill us only." Wake
Masaek korway kobagach tuga chechang kot ingap kabwat
 Masai run away they left cattle many indeed because think the
Masaek kole "Kagemei, Ongemwey." Komwey ak kobagach
 Masai say "We are dead, Let us run off." They run off and leave
tuga tugul. Kobwa kwanet ab Kogi piik konomu kityo konyaban
 cattle all. Came the files of Kogi people fifty only capture
tuga chechang koget kot koit Kipsigis. Koik mogorek
 cattle which many drove till reached Kipsigis. Became rich
kogejn Kipsigis en ngomnotet ab Kogi.
 again Kipsigis in sense³ of Kogi.

Yeboch.

End.

¹ We will go up and down this hill in single file so as to make the Masai think that we are a large army.

² Until it became.

³ Because of the cleverness of.

PANTAGRUEL

Kimii - chii en kejn negikuren Kipsugut
 There was a man in years ago who was called Kipsugut
ago inendet, ko chito ne omin got. Mache
 and himself he was a man who eater very much.¹ Wants
omituogik chechang amun kiwo got ago koy
 food in great quantity because he was big indeed and tall
ago ngwo kot konyor segemik, komoome kumiik
 and then if he went till he met bees, he would not eat the honey
ichegen, ome tugul ak segemik. Ago kitijn osotikyik
 only, he would eat everything and the bees. And he has his wives
muut ago mangen osotik kole omini. Tun pesiet
 five and do not know his wives that he is a big eater. Some day
age Kole, "Olyone, sikonai osotikyuk ngo oomiiin."
 he said, "What shall I do, may know my wives that I am eater."

Kole "Kaanai." Kotil Kokwet ab pik taman, ak kolenji
 He said "I know." He asks the Kokwet of people ten, and he told
osotikyik oriech mayuek ab Kokwet, ak omituogik ab pik taman.
 his wives make the beer of Kokwet, and food of people ten.²

Konget Kipsugul konam mognibaik taman kwo imbar, kotemis
 Wake Kipsugut take hoes ten he goes field, he digs
kotar imbaret ab pik taman akolemen mogombosiek tugul.
 to finish the field of people ten he digs with hoes all.
Koy kakotwo konyo koterech mayuek enteret neo ak
 When he had finished came put down the beer in pot big and
konem rogorosiek taman kou pik taman. Koem
 took out drinking tubes ten same as people ten. He drunk
mayuek tugul. Keip amituogik chebo pik taman koam tugul kot
 the beer all. They bring the food of people ten he eats all till
komanget kiy. Kobwa kwonyikyik koip kiskisik ak
 not remain anything. Came his wives to take away the basket
sotonik ko mager chi age tugul kokwong kwonyik.
 and calabashes is not see man any all surprised the women.

Kole, "Kaam ngo kimoik tugul ak mayuek tugul?" Kolenji
 They say, "ate who food all and beer all?" Tells them
chito age "Mongen Kipsugut ole ame tela
 the man then "You never knew Kipsugut that he (can) eat a cow
inegen ii?"
 all by himself?"

¹ He was a big eater.

² He asks the Kokwet, that is, people from his Kokwet, to come and work on his fields. Kokwet means here "the working term of the Kokwet".

Konay osotik koyoe amituogik chechang en kipchulyo
 They know his wives to prepare food many in everyday
ko ame kiskisik tiptem ak muul ak chego sotonik sosom.
 is eating baskets twenty and five and milk calabashes thirty.
Ak kotun osotik chechang asi kotem imbarenik
 And he married wives many so that they may cultivate
chechang. Osotik ab Kipsugut ko taman ak tisap.
 fields many. The wives of Kipsugut are ten and seven.

Yeboch.

End.

WOMAN IS THE ENEMY OF MANKIND : SHE CANNOT BE TOLD
 OF KIMANAGAN.¹

Tun pesiet age kotuni kwondo chilo ne kimogorion kot.
 Then day another he married a wife a man who rich indeed.
Kongete chilo kogoilo tuga alak koba kimanagan ak
 Wakes the man gave out cattle another to Kimanagan² and
nego che chang kot. Kotukso tuga tugul chemiten piut
 goats which many indeed. Dried off cattle all which is in kraal
ab chichoton ko aboen tuga alak chemii
 of that man is suckling by calves cattle another which is
kimanagan. Ngap koik rubet emet komugul koriryo
 kimanagan.³ When became shortage of food country all crying
lagok en rubet. Ago kigomwochi chilo konyin
 the children in hunger. And then he told the man his wife
tuga chemi oldo age. Kolenji kanyin chilo "uy
 cattle which is place another.⁴ Said the wife (to) the man "go
ketun tuchun mii k'ap anum ak nego chemii
 bring those cattle which are in hut of so-and-so and goats which is
kot anum amun kabek lagok en rubet." Kolenji
 hut of so-and-so because finish⁴ the children of hunger." Said the
chito "pichoton ko magechin lagokwak i?" Kwendi.
 man "those people is not milk for their children?"⁵ She went

¹ *Kimanagan* is the custom of lending out one's cows to friends (*vide* "Economics").

² His own cattle stopped giving milk.

³ That is, of the *Kimanagan*. ⁴ Will die.

⁵ What will happen to those people? Will they not want milk for their children?

kwondo en pesiet age en peet kogetu arretet
 the woman in day another at day-time drive hither a goat
en kimanagan amamu ochi chito. Kolenji chito
 of kimanagan without the permission (of) man. Said the man ¹
"amune sigetu amoonoyoun?" Kole
 "why you drive here? I did not give you permission" Said
kwondo "ani lagok mabegu ak rubet i?" "Ko"
 the woman "the children are not dying and hungry?" "Is"
kigile "magimwochin korgo tany anan aran nemii
 he said "not allowed to tell woman cow or goat which is
kimanagan matiny kerotyot ko magimwochin agot
 kimanagan even first wife is not allowed to tell her even
chepto, kimwochin ngetet inegen amun chechik
 the daughter, is permitted to tell the boy only him because is his
tuguk, ani korgo age tugul ko punyon ak kora."
 things,² but woman any all is enemy and even now."

Yeboch.

End.

THE CRAFTINESS OF THE RABBIT ³

En kejn kokinget kiplekwet ne kigakonetke. Kwo
 At long ago got up the rabbit who was learned.⁴ He went
kwokotita kot age konyor chit ap koikan konget
 until reached hut another he met man of that hut go up
chichi kan kolenji, "Iwendi ano kiplekwet?" Kolenji
 man that said to him, "You going where rabbit?" He told him
"Asomoti kapchi netinye lakwa, otingji?" Kolenji
 "I ask for man's hut who has a child, have you?" He said
chichikan "Nyon!" Petut agenge konget ak Koyejn arretet
 that man "Come!" Day one he got up ⁵ and flayed goat
yeilio koton panyek ak kolenji kanyin "Kotgot
 after that cut pieces meat and told his wife "Put pot on
anyun panyek asi iwe imbar sibakach kolal,
 fire very much meat then you go field and leave to cook

¹ Her husband. ² As everything will be inherited by the sons.

³ The rabbit is said to be the craftiest of all animals and is often shown cheating the other animals with his vicious tricks.

⁴ *Kigakonet* here means "sly".

⁵ The man who took the rabbit as his child's nurse.

kiplekwa." *Kokotgot kwondo ak kwo imbar.*
this, rabbit." She put the pot on the fire the woman and went field.

Konjin ingun kiplekwa yewendi konome lakwet
He waited until then the rabbit when gone he took the child

komurmurchin, ma konome panyek kwome tugul, yeitio
cut it into pieces, from the fire he took meat ate all, after that

kotil eunek ak konde kewochet, yeitio konde
he cut hand and put it wooden plate, after that he put

tabot ak kolep kot koit kamet ab lakwet
(in) granary and he stayed till arrived mother of child

kokakonom anyun kiptarurut ak konde kenut
and has taken very many dung-beetle and put it hollow wood

orit ak kotuch kiptarurut. Konyon koit kamet
inside and he covered dung-beetle. Came arrived mother

ab lakwa kwo koitama ak konam anyun panyek en ma
of child went stone of fire and she took very much meat in fire

konem kotil konde kut. Kongete kiplekwa
took off and cut put it (in her) mouth. Got up the rabbit

kwendi yun bo turgat ak kosisige. Kokur kwanyi
he went there¹ of door and kept quiet. She called woman

kan, kelenji, "Kiplekwa lekonde kut panyechu komweon koroti?
that, said, "Rabbit why I put mouth this meat run off blood?

Inget lakwet kochuchun?" Kolenji "Achicha!
Did he wake up the child to suck?" He said "No! I gave

Kotakwe inguni sikorue". Yeitio katuni en
him porridge just now and he slept". After that he sings

yun bo kurgat ak kolene: "Angen kinyane chi nome
at there² of door and saying: "I know myself man who ate

lakwenyin, angen kinyane chi nome lakwenyin!" Kosisige
his child, I know myself man who ate his child!" She kept

kwonyikan kot kolenji kiplekwa "Ne chu
quiet that woman till she told rabbit "What is this you

imwoe?" Kole "Achicha tuguk". Kwanyikan kole
are saying?" He said "Nothing at all." That woman said

"Inager lakwet". Konyor kenut ak kiptarurut.
"Let me see the child". She found follow wood and dung beetle.*

Komwei kiplekwa.
Run away the rabbit.

Yeboch.

End.

¹ and ² Near.

THE SON-IN-LAW WILL ALWAYS HAVE THE BETTER OF HIS
MOTHER-IN-LAW.

Ko kigay konget chito kwo koito, kechamji kotun.
He got up a man went to propose, he was accepted to marry.
Ngap toma kotun kolenji koruginyit "amache inomwon"
When not yet to marry said his wife's mother "I want you take
arokiet nemii parak asi itun
for me the arokiet¹ which is up above and then you will
lakwenyun". *Kole sandet "aliyone asi anam*
marry my child". Said the in-law² "What shall I do to catch
arokiet?" *Kobuat kole "mnye aejn teta*
the arokiet?" He thought and he say "good I flay the cow
asi anam agutaniet anirnir, koguit ko
and then I take the intestine and I stretch them, if reach is
imuche kochorgee arokiet yeker pendo, si yeluguy agutaniet
can come down arokiet if it see meat, when if it swallow the
amuch anam. Koejn teta ak konam agutaniet
intestine I can catch it. He flayed a cow and he took intestine
konirnir kogoit, kogeer arokiet kochorgee
stretched it to be long, was looking on the arokiet it came down
ak koluguan agutaniet kot konyi moet kor kole
and swallowed the intestine till full the stomach when it wants
kotiriren kwo parak kotemene. Konyo chichoton konam hoipchi
to fly to go up it cannot. Came that man caught it took it to
pogerinyin, kochamji koruginyit kotun
his wife's mother, agree to him his wife's mother to marry
lakwenyin, komut konyin. Tun en pesiet age ak ine
his child, she sent to his hut. Then one day another he also
sandet amache alenji poger konamwon
the (son) in-law thought, I want to tell mother-in-law to take for me
isonet konde mesendet ak koibwon. Konget kwo komwochi
the wind put it basket and bring to me. He got up went to tell
pogerinuin. Kolenji "amache inamwon isonet
his mother-in-law. Said "I want you take for me the wind
ak indewon mesendet konyi ak iibwon." *Kobwat*
and put for me in basket full and bring to me." Though his
koruginyit kole "alione asi anam isonet
mother-in-law say "What shall I do that I may take the wind

¹ A species of bird.

² Here, the son-in-law.

ak onde mesendet konyi ? " *Kole " aname mesendet*
 and put in the basket to fill ? " She said " I will take the basket
ak awaande ole usen isonet yenyi awe oipchi
 and go to put where blows the wind when full . I go send to
sandenyun. Konam mesendet koip kwo konde yeuse
 my (son) in-law. She took the basket went put where blowing
mising, kotebi mesendet en oloton ak kwendii kogere ngo
 very much, stayed the basket in there and she went to see if
kagonyi, ngoilita yoton koger ko mamii kiy kologor koimen
 is full, if reach there look there was nothing until became night
amagere kiy age tugul. Ko lun karon kwo
 she would not see thing other any. Is to-morrow morning
kolenji sandet " Maata amuch anam isonet." Kele
 went to told (son) in-law " I not able to take the wind." Say
Kipsigis " makitole sanian ".
 Kipsigis " Not win the case the in-laws ".

Yeboch.

End.

THE MAN WHO KILLED HIS BROTHER

Chito ne kipar ngetapkam

Kimii chi ne kibaisolion kot ko
 There was man who was " very worker " very much
ngetapkam ko choriren kot, itu ko ome ngetkong
 and his brother is very lazy indeed, always getting jealous
en tuguk ab ngetapkam amun kitinye tuguk chechang
 of things of his brother because he had thing which many ¹
tuga ak nego. Ko tun en pesiet age kosetyi
 cattle and goats. Is one day at day ² another he goes hiding
kemoi kot kopar ngetapkam akobo tugukyik. Tun kele
 night till kills his brother because of his things.³ Then said
piik " ya chi netinye ngetkong amun ngetkong ak
 the people " bad man who is jealous because jealousy and
tengek ko agenge."
 sin is one ! "

Yeboch.

End.

¹ Because his brother was rich in . . .

² Because he wanted to take his things.

³ Some day.

THE POOR MAN

En kejn kogimiten kibananiat nekingom. Kotech
In years ago there was a poor man who was clever. He built
kot neo, ak koyai tabolet neo nemuche komejn chito.
a hut big, and made the Tabot ¹ big in which can live a man.

Konam kot ab ngwong konde nego ak gechirek, komejn inendet
He took hut of down puts the goats and sheep, he dwells himself

kot ab parak. En pesiet age koit chito nemogoriot
(in) hut of above. In day another ² arrive a man who is rich
kolenji, "chichi: Amache kot aal." Kolenji kibananiat,
tell him, "you man: I want the hut to buy." Tell him the poor man,

"oldoi kot ab paraki amun amejn nebo ngwong ak
"I sale hut of above because I live in the one of down and
nekyuk, anan komeal tugul nimuche?" Kolenji mogoriot "achicha!
my goats, or buy all if you can?" Tell him rich man "No!

Amache nebo parak." Kochomnji kibananiat, kot ab
I want (the hut) of above." He agreed the poor man, and the
parak, kwalen tuga somok.
hut of above, he sold for cattle three.

Komejn mogoriot kot petusiek tutigin kolenji kibananiat
Lived the rich man till days few tell him the poor man

"Mogoriondoni, nam kongung en parak amun amache apu
"Rich man, hold your hut at above because I want to
nenyun, an awo oldaage." Kolenji
break mine, I move to go to another place." Tell him

mogoriot "matiput negung' kaigai aal tugul asi
the rich man "don't break yours better I buy all and then
manyalil, ara anamndoi ano kot?" Konget
I don't have trouble, well can I hold how this hut?" He got up

mogoriot, kwal kot komugul en olyet negimache
the rich man, he bought hut all at price was wanted by
kibananiat. Koik mogorion kibananiat en ngomnotenyin.
the poor man. Become rich the poor man in his sense.³

Yeboch.

End.

¹ Granary above the ground floor.

² One day.

³ Because of his cleverness.

"A MALIN, MALIN ET DEMI"

Kimii chilo kibananiat ne kiyogisie
 There was a man poor who was working as a shepherd
en kaptugut ab chilo mogoriot, ko tun pesiet age koyokto mogoriot
 at kraal of man rich, one of these days sent for him the rich
piik kole, "olenjin kibananiat konyo kaa."
 man the people¹ saying, "You tell the pauper to come home."
Konget kibananiat kwo kotita kap mogoriot, koger
 Wakes the pauper went reached place of rich man, he saw
kwonyik ab mogoriot kibananiat komach kot ago
 the women of the rich man the pauper he desires them very much
maasich ole soktoo. Kotebi ine
 but can't get how to make love.² He stayed himself
kibananiat k'ap mogoriot ak komache kwonyik ab
 the poor man hut of rich man³ and he desired the wives of
mogoriot petusiek tugul ago masiche ole sachen. Kototun
 rich man days all but he can't get how to make love. Until
pesiet age kolenji chichi ap kaa kibananiat, "amache
 day another tell him this man of house⁴ to the poor, "I want
kebe kaplich tuan," kolenji kibananiat, "ee ingebe."
 we go place of cows both," said the poor man, "Yes, let us go."
Kongetyo koba ngonii oret kwenet kolenji
 They got up they went if they are way middle⁵ tell him
mogoriot "kibananiat wegen ui ibwon tumotet
 the rich man "poor man turn back go bring me the snuff
en kaa," kowek kibananiat kot koit kap mogoriot,
 at home," turned the poor man till reached hut of rich man,
kolenji kwonyik ab mogoriot kagilenjon "anyo keruiyen tugul
 he told wives of rich man he said "I came to sleep together
ak okwek tuan." Kolenji kwonyik "kamwoun
 and you both too." They said the wives "who gave you
ngo?" Kole kibananiat "kamwoun manongot-
 permission?" Said the poor man "he told me your
yondengwong." Kolenji kwonyik "ongekur ketebeen."
 husband." They said the wives "let us call to ask him."*

¹ The rich man sent the people to call him.

² But he cannot think of a way to have intercourse with them.

³ The poor man stayed as a guest in the hut of the rich man.

⁴ The master of the house.

⁵ When they were half-way through.

Koguur kibananiat kole, "Weri weri" koyan chito ab
 He called the poor man said, "Son, son,"¹ agreed the man of
kaa kole, "Eeh!" kolenji "kagoet kwonyiguk."
 house said, "Eeh!" he said² "they refuse your wives."
Kolenji chito ab kaa kwonyikyik, "Ogochin," kole
 Said the man of the house (to) his wives, "Give him," say the
kwonyik "ile takogenech ii". Koba koruiyo ak
 women "He is not cheating us". They went to sleep with
kibananiat kwonyik tuwan. Yeitio konem tumatet
 poor man³ women both-two. After that he took the snuff
kibananiat kosip mogoriot. Koba koit
 poor man (and) followed the rich man. They go reach
kaptich. Ko tun kowek mogoriot en kaptich konyo
 place of cattle. He then returned the rich from place of cattle
koit kaa, konyor kwonyikyik konereklos. Kotebee
 came reached home, he met his wives who are angry. He asked
kolenji, "Ne onereklosii?" Kowolji kwonyik kolenji,
 them said, "Why are you angry?" Replied the women said,
"amun ne asi ilenui kibananiat konyo keriyen
 "because why then you told the poor man to come we sleep
tugul?" Kole mogoriot, "Ou?" Kolenji kwonyik, "ani
 together?" Said the rich "When?" Said the women, "from
petut kiobendi kaptich komaobe nomii oret
 day you were going place of cattle you didn't go while you
ilenji wegen oba oruiyeni?" Kole
 were on the way⁴ you told him go back go sleep together?" Said
mogoriot "kialenji kautye tumatet wegen uy ibuan!"
 the rich "I told him I forgot the snuff turn back go bring to me!"
Kolenji kwonyik "kinyo amamuowech tumatet, kilenjech,
 Said the women "he came not to tell us the snuff, he told us,
kogile anyo keruiyen tugul ab okwek! Kolenji ak echek
 said I came sleep together with you! We said ourselves
kuur keteben ngo iman, ko magurini, iyan. Ak kolenjin,
 call we ask him if is true, and you call, you agree. And he said,
'Kagoet! kagoet!' ko mele ak inye 'Ogochin
 "They refuse! they refuse!" and replied and you 'Give him

¹ A usual term of address simply meaning "You, there".

² The poor man is speaking.

³ That Kipsigis women would meekly submit to their husband's will to this extent is more than doubtful. I have not come across any wife-lending among the Kipsigis.

⁴ Before you arrived.

ogochin,' ee. Ko magibwan kigochi echek tuwan, kele
give him,' yes. So we came we gave him ourselves both two,
amun kaimwa, ilen katakogenech kibananiat.
(we) say because you ordered, he is not cheating us, the poor.

Yeityo konem tumatet kibananiat kosibun ak
After that he took the snuff the poor followed you and
obe!" Kogas kingwan mogoriot inne ak kosisigee
you go!" Heard angry the rich indeed and he kept quiet
kityo kotatun kosich tuga kibananiat kotun kwondonyin. Ko
only until he got cattle the pauper he married his wife. He
tun kogas mogoriot kele kogogeso kibananiat. Tun
then heard the rich say (that) got married the poor.¹ Then
pesiet age kogeer mogoriot kole kogotun kwondo kibananiat.
day another he saw the rich that he had married a wife the poor.
Kole ago kigoruiyo ak kwonyikyuk amache keruiyen
He said and then he slept with my wives I want to sleep
ak nenyin ak ane asi kolaige. Tun en

with his own and me² then I will be revenged. Then one
pesiet age kwo mogoriot konyor kibananiat kalaal kog.
day another went the rich he met the poor man lighting outside

Kole "inoguum tumatet," kolenji "mii ko tumatet
the hut. Say "give me the snuff," he said, "It is inside the snuff
ui ye en ko." Kwo mogoriot ngomii ko kolenji kwondo
go drink³ in house." Went the rich while he is inside he told
ab kibananiat, "kole manongotiot ingeruiyen!" kolenji
wife of the poor, "said your husband let us sleep!" she said
"miten ano manongotondinyun?" Kole chilo "mi bii".
"he is where my husband?" Said the man "is out".
Kolenji "ingekur ketebeen." Kogur chichigan "Weri
She said "let us call to ask him." Call by that man, "Son,
weri" koyam en bii kole "Yo," kolenji, "kagoet," kole kibananiat
Son "agreed at out said "Yo," said "She refuses" said the pauper
"kyamne korgoni kiyet tugun anigochi?"
"what is wrong with this woman refusing things just give him?"

Kongetyo koruiyo ak mogoriot en ko, yeitio kolenji
They went slept with rich man inside the hut, after that he said
"konon tumatet". kogochi tumatet kwam ak
"give me the snuff". She gave him the snuff ate it and

¹ The rich man heard that the poor man had married.

² Ak means both "with" and "and".

³ It is liquid snuff, which is put in the nostrils.

komang' kolenji kibananiat "saisere, kowe kanyun". Kwo
came out tell the poor man "Goodbye, I go my house". Went
mogoriot kolenji kwonyikyik, kaayakte pesendo. Tun kogas kibananiat
the rich told his wives, I have paid debt. Then heard the poor
kele kigoruiyo mogoriot ak kanyin, kobet olenerektoo
that has slept the rich and his wife, he could not be angry
amun enende ne kinome korok, kosisige mogoriot
because himself who was start first, kept quiet the rich man
kolotun koyakta en pesionoton, kosisige ak ine kibananiat.
until he paid at that day, kept quiet and also the poor man.
Kolebi pichon tuwan koik choronoï, kibananiat ak
Stayed those both two became friends, the poor man and
mogoriot kolagay.
the rich man for ever.

Yeboch.

End.

THE BABOON AND THE MAN

A Lesson in Humanity

En kejn konget chito kobar aruet ab mōoset. Kawone
In years ago got up man killed young of baboon. He was
yegai kamet ngap kagabet
pursuing at first its mother (but) because he did not catch
kamet kobar aruet kowalen. Ngap kagoip
his mother he killed the young instead.¹ Because had taken
chi aruet, kolagole kamet konget ak
man young,² to see where he was going the mother³ got up and
kosip. Kwo kolajn kilit kosua kot ne kochul
followed. She went climbed the tree to see hut which entered by
chichikan. Konget kwo karon koit kagimokon
that man. She got up⁴ went early morning arrived he put down
lakwet en keter ak keba imbar. Kogere
to sleep the child in thatching and went (to) field.⁴ She saw

¹ A man was pursuing a baboon. As he did not catch the mother, he killed her baby.

² Because this man had taken her baby.

³ The mother baboon.

⁴ The mother baboon is spying. She sees this man (or, rather, his wife) put the child to sleep on the thatching of his hut.

kageba konome komuti kolongsie ketit
 they have gone she took she carried off she climbs the tree
lakwanigan. Ngotila ketit barak kogomot
 (with) child that. When she reached tree top she pinches
anyun ak kiligin korire lakwet. Kongasis kamet.
 very hard and little¹ cried the child. Heard by (his) mother.
en imbar kole "Lakwenyun njon rire". Konget kolabat
 at field she said "My child which crying". She got up she run
kot koit kot megomi nyu kokabakagen. Kasue
 till reached hut it was not there where she had left it. She saw
komi kilit barak koteben kolenji "O tionyinyon" konam mōoset
 it is tree up she asked she said "You animal" took baboon
kogomot kapkejn. Koris lakwet. Ngap karir lakwet korir
 and pinched again. Cried the child. When crying the child cry
anyun agine kamet kole "oi, oi, oi, lakwenyun".
 very much also his mother saying "oi, oi, oi, my child".
konget anyun mōoset ak kotien, kole, "Ee bong!"
 Got up at once the baboon and sung, saying, "Ee bong!"²
Anyin kobochi ngwan kobo tiojn?" Yeityo koriryo
 Sweet child of man bitter child of animal?"³ After that they
anyun tuan, Kelene chito "oi, oi,
 cry very much both, she was saying the woman "oi, oi,
lakwenyun" kolene mōoset "Kowa ano
 my child" and saying the baboon "Gone where my
Chemōosenyun?" Kogomot kakwanigan agai kome.
 little baboon?" She pinched that child until died.

Yeboch.

End.

HOW A MAN TOOK HIS FRIEND'S SWEETHEART

En kejn ko kimii piik oeng kaptugut agenge ak tibiik
 In years ago there were people two kraal one⁴ and girls
che chang. Ko chito agenge ko kisache chepto agenge ne kararan
 which many.⁵ Is man one is make love girl one which good

¹ (In) a little (while).

² Alas, equivalent to the Greek οἶμοι!

³ Is the child of a baboon less cherished by its mother than the child of man?

⁴ Two men who shared one kraal.

⁵ And they had many sweethearts in their huts.

kot kosir tugul. Pesiet kongetyo tuwan koba aptich.
indeed than all.¹ One day they get up both² they go to herding.
Ngomi aptich kolenji ingo "Kilyone raini
When they were herding they tell one another "What shall
ago makitinye pusiek che yamech kekwony
we do to-day and then we have no flour which enough to cook
asi kyam ak tibiik, ingyam syechu ngorngor asi korok
then to eat and girls,³ let us eat nettles young⁴ and then later
langat kesakye konyi tibiik kwam. Kongetyi tuwan kobirir
evening we will let the girls eat.⁵ They got up both two they rub
syek chengorngor ak kwome. Ko maame ine ingo, kwame
nettles which young and ate. He did not eat that another he ate
chito ne sache chepto ne kararan, kwam ine
man who make love with girl which is good, he eats alone⁶
kot kobiyyo. Kongetyi koba kaptich. Kor kokuaajn
till satisfied. They get up they go to the kraal. After cooked
tibiik kimoik ak kogochi murenik, kolenji murenik
the girls the food and gave the warriors, tell them the warriors,
"Kongoy oam okwek." Konam chego lolongeyiwek
"Thank you eat yourselves." They took the milk fresh milk
ak kollu tuwan ak koruiyo. En kemoy kolal moet
and drink both two and they sleep. At night it hurts stomach
ab chito ne kwame syek, kolenji ingo "Nget
of man who ate the nettles, he said (to) the other, "Wake up
imutan sigek "Kolenji chorwenyin "pichin kipkorotit
send me⁷ defecate". He said his friend "defecate in blood-pot⁸
asi tun kason alektatin." Kopichi
and then to-morrow morning I will cover you." He did defecate in
kipkorotit konyi ak kogonor. Kitigin kopichi
blood-pot filled it and kept it. Little time he defecates on
magatet kogejn ak kogonor. Karon kaech komanda tibiik
skin again and keeps it. Morning became day went out the girls

¹ She was more beautiful than all the other girls.

² The two friends who were sharing the kraal.

³ They did not have enough flour for themselves and the girls.

⁴ Young, tender.

⁵ We will eat the nettles and let the girls eat the flour.

⁶ The other man tricked his friend with the beautiful girl friend into eating the nettles, but he abstained from partaking of that meal.

⁷ "Come with me." He did not want to go out by himself from fear of the wild animals.

⁸ Where they collect the blood of the oxen after bleeding them.

kongu piut ak komiten piik alak kobure en pii.
 to sweep kraal and there is people others seating outside.
Kolenji chito ingo noni kopichin kipkorolit,
 Said man another to the one who defecate in blood-pot
 "mangun ataktatan". *Komanda ak koibe kipkorolit*
 "Come out I cover you." He went out and taking the blood-pot
ak magatet en ingqryet orit koba. Ngomii piut
 and the skin in cloth inside they go. While they were kraal
kwenet korich chorwenyin kobut ngwony koyyesta kipkorolit
 middle he tripped his friend fell down it split the blood-pot
ak kotumndagee chemii magatet. Korosisa piik tugul ak
 and they are spilt what is in the skin. Laughed people all and
tibiik. Keguren chichoton "Kibichi ko".
 girls. He was called that man "The defecator in hut".

(The story goes on to say how disgusted the girl was with the "Kibichi Ko" and that she left him to go and live with the other man. In the end as usual, he had his revenge, and the two friends were reconciled.)

FRIENDSHIP¹ OF CALABASH AND SKIN

Kitechgee Sotet ak Magatet

Konget chii age kwo kot konyor chilo age kotile
 Wakes man another went till meet man another cutting
sotenyin, ibule kulit ab sotet, kolenji
 calabash, symmetrically the mouth of calabash, he said
 "ketilde ano sotet, ne kairwech?"
 "you cut how the calabash, why are you destroying it?"
Kolenji "ne katile sotet, katil amun mangan
 He said "How cutting the calabash, I cut because I don't
olekitildoo inetan ibak!" Kolenji chichoton, tilunen
 know how to cut teach me please!" Tell by that man, cut it from
keel sotet asi imuch ichegu tenderek.
 the bottom the calabash and you will be able to take out the
Kotil ak ine sotenyin keel ak kochek
 seeds. He cut it and he his calabash the bottom and took out

¹ *Kitechgee*, lit. they obeyed.

tenderek kot kogeske, kole "kosua sotet komii konda
the seeds till finished, said "Look the calabash there is a hole
komosi ak komosi!" konerech chito ab sotet ak
this side and this side!"¹ he became angry the man of calabash

kosisige. Tun pesiet age kwo ak ine chito ab
and he silence.² Some other day he went and he the man of

sotet konyor chichi kiiberbere koenye arrtet
calabash he met the man who cheated him, he was flaying

ab tumdo. Kolenji chito ab sotet "ne
the goat of ceremony.³ He says the man of calabash, "why

keengunen arrtet?" Kole ak ine nebo arrtet
are you flaying the goat?" Said and he owner of goat

"kaengune moet". Kolenji ne kibo sotet
"I flayed from stomach". Tell him who belong calabash

"kererunen patay amun bo tumdo arrtet".
"split it from back because of ceremony the goat".

Kogererunen patay kogejn, yeityo koyejn; yekagoengak
He split from the back again, after that he flayed; when

koger ko kaik magataik oeng, konerech kot chito
finish flay he saw is became skins two,⁴ he angry very much man

nebo arrtet amun kagobeiyo tumdo ne kito kiyaen
of the goat because spoilt the ceremony which was making with

arrtanatok. Kotun kele "kiteigee magata ak
that goat. From this the saying "It obeys the skin and

sot". Amun kingalge piik oeng kwo kobet
calabash". Because they cheated people two⁵ till destroyed

sotet nekilo kiluen chego, ak kwo kobeiyo
the calabash in which was to be drunk the milk, and till was

tumdo nekilo kiyaen arrtet.
destroyed the ceremony in which was to be used the goat.

Yeboch.

End.

¹ He found that he had made holes on both sides of his calabash.

² But he kept silent.

³ He was preparing for some ceremony and killed a goat to examine the entrails for auspices.

⁴ He saw that instead of having a single skin, he had cut it in two.

⁵ Because two men cheated each other.

TWO MEN, TRUTH AND SIN
Piik Oeng', Iman ak Tengek

Kingetyo piik oeng, Iman ak Tengek. Kelenjikee
They got up people two, Truth and Sin. They told them-
ingeruten kebe emet ne loo got, kole tuwan
selves let us travel to go country which far indeed, say both
ingebe. Konget Iman ak lagokyik lo, Tengek ak
let us go. He got up Truth and his children six, Sin and
lagokyik somok, koba ngomii oret kwenet komache
his children three, they went when they are way middle it wants
koimen, kotebee Iman Tengek kolenji "kirue
to be night¹ asked Truth the Sin he told him "we will sleep
ano yeiman?" Kowalji Tengek kolenji "arue
where when becomes night?" Replied the Sin tell him "I will
ketit parak ak lagokyuk," kolenji Iman "arue
sleep tree above and my children" tell him the Truth "I will
ngwong ak lagokyuk". Koba yeimen
sleep down and my children". They went when came the night
kolany ketit parak Tengek ak lagokyik koru ngwong
he climbs tree above the Sin and his children, he slept down
Iman ak lagokyik. Koruiyo ngomi kemoi kwen
the Truth and his children. They sleep when was night middle
kowus isone kotururgee Tengek ak lagokyik komeiyo
blows the wind, falls down the Sin and his children they died
tugul, konget ine Iman. "Ara!" kigila, "Iman
all, remain himself² the Truth. "Well!" they said,³ "Truth
ko kararan Tengek ko ya."
is good, Sin is bad."

Yeboch.
End.

THE METAMORPHOSIS OF MOIPATAJN

En kejn kogimii chito ne kimogorion kot ago
In years ago there was a man who was rich indeed but
kimagotinye lakwa. Itu kocham kosome Asis kolenjin
he had no child. He used to like to beg God to tell him

¹ When they had gone half way, night fell.

² Alone.

³ Said the people of old.

"Konan lakwet" en kipchulyo ago en petusiek chechang.
 "Give me child" at every day and then in days which many.¹
 En pesiet age en kemoi kogas chito kogure kolenjin,
 At day another at night he hears a man call him tells him,
 "Chichi" 'koyan, kole, "Kelene? Amiyu."
 "you man" he agrees, said, "What you say? I am here."
 Kolenji, "ane nekamwoun alenjin isiche lakwet
 He said, "I, I who promise you, I told you you will get the child
 toma petusiek che machang".
 yet days which not many".²

Kotebi chichoton egosiek tutigin, kosich leta moita ago
 Stayed that man days few, born by the cow a calf and
 chito kogejn koguren "Moipatajn". Kotobi moyaton en
 then man again³ he called "Moipatajn". Stayed that calf in
 petusiek tutigin koyet kotenit chilo ne o ak en kenyisiek muut
 days few he grew became as man big and in years five
 ko chito nemuche koset luget ago kigiim en kiy tugul!
 is man who can go to army and then was strong in things all!

Tun kogimii chepto age negilene, "amache kotunan
 One day there was a girl another who said, "I want to marry
 chito negiim, chito nemuche koganap eito ana ko kirgit
 me a man who is strong, man who can lift up ox or the bull
 ab tuga ab paba!" Koba koito piik
 of cattle⁴ of my father". Came (to) marriage proposal people
 chechang inne ko mapiit chii age tugul nekamuch koganap
 many indeed is not found man any all who able to take up
 eito anan ko kirgit ab tuga. En petut age kogas Moipatajn kole,
 ox or is bull of cattle. At day another heard by Moipatajn said,
 "Amache owo otun cheboton," Kwo kol koit kambogot
 "I want to go to marry that girl," he went till reach the hut of
 cheboton, kwo koru singroina. Karon kotuiyo
 that girl, he went to sleep warriors' hut. Morning they meet
 ak chepto, kotebech kolenji, "kele chito netunin
 and the girl, he asks her tells her, "You said man who marries
 koya ne?" Kowalji chepto kolenji, "Chilo
 you must do what?" Replied him the girl tell him, "Man

¹ He begged God every day.

² You will have a child in a few days.

³ And then he was metamorphosed into a man.

⁴ The kirgit ab tuga is the big ox which walks in front of the herd.

age tugul nemuche koganap eito ana ko kirgit ab tuga ab Aboiyon
 any all who can take up ox or is bull of cattle of my Father
 ko noton netunon kityo." Kowalji akine chito
 is that who marry me only." Replied her and he the man
 kolenji "mnyano eyoton ak kirgit ab tuga ab konut?"
 tell her "where that ox and bull of cattle of your father?"
 Koguur chepto mestowet kolenji, "Ketun eito ak
 Call by the girl the herdsman tell him, "Drive hither ox and
 kirgit ab tuga kolenji ket koba yeyun milen Moipatajn."
 bull of cattle tell him drive to go there where is Moipatajn."
 Konget Moipatajn ak koganap eito koip koiit kaa ak kowech
 Get up Moipatajn and pick up ox took reach home and turn
 kogejn konde ngwojn, konam kirgit ab tuga koganap
 back again he puts down, he takes the bull of cattle hold up
 ak koip koiit kaa konyil ayeng, ak kowech konyo konde
 and took reach home times two, and return it back came put
 ngwojn. Konyo chepto kogochi eut kogat kee ak Moipatajn,
 down. Came the girl give him hand and shook it with Moipatajn,
 kotun Moipatajn cheboton ak komut koba tuwan koit
 marry by Moipatajn that girl and send her to go both two reach
 kambogot Moipatajn. Ko tun kome Kwanda ab Moipatajn
 hut of Moipatajn. And a day die the father of Moipatajn
 kondi tuga tugul Moipatajn koik mogorion kou Kwanda.
 inherited cattle all Moipatajn became rich man same as his
 father.

Yeboch.

End.

SONGS

THE WARRIORS' SONG

Obot lakwa oo wo ho obot lakwa oo wo ho kot kot
 Mother of child mother of child put on fire

teret
 the pot oo wo ho

Kot kot teret oo wo ho nebulum met
 Put on fire the pot which easily boils a head ¹

¹ Which can easily boil a whole head.

oo wo ho *kaseet luget*
is going to war the army oo wo ho

Kaseet luget
Is going to war the army oo wo ho *olimengen*
where you don't know

oo wo ho *kaseet luget*
is going to war the army oo wo ho

Kaseet luget
Is going to war the army oo wo ho *Mangorori*
(to) Mangorori oo wo ho

Oye leiyo oo wo ho *oye leiyo* oo wo ho *Arap Tombo* oo wo ho
Arap Tombo

Arap Tombo oo wo ho *reger etyet* oo wo ho *kobun*
Arap Tombo repair the bridge so that
kogyet
may pass the army oo wo ho

Oye leiyo oo wo ho *Arap Mama* oo wo ho *kaseet*
Arap Mama is going to war the
luget oo wo ho
army

Kanget luget
Is awake the army oo wo ho *kaseet luget*
is going to war the army

oo wo ho *kobar Kipsiyabe* oo wo ho
to capture the Kipsiyabe

Arap Tombo oo wo ho *reger etyet* oo wo ho *Kobun*
Arap Tombo repair the bridge so that
luga
may pass the cattle oo wo ho

Asal murenyon oo wo ho *chapkimu*
I praise those warriors when there is a scare they
korigir
kneel on one foot oo wo ho *Kai kanget*
After they stand up
kowarir
they shout oo wo ho

Oye leiyo oo wo ho *Kai kanget kowarir* oo wo ho
after they stand up they shout

kou pelyot
like the elephant ¹ oo wo ho

Pamurtanyun oo wo ho *isur suberet*
My brother's wife press the food in the war bag ²

¹ When they see the enemy they kneel down and hide and as he approaches they stand up and shout like an elephant, to put terror into his heart.

² A bag full of food carried during long journeys.

- oo wo ho *kanget luget* oo wo ho
wake the army
- Kaseet luget* oo wo ho *kobar Masai* oo wo ho
Is going to war the army to kill the Masai
ooye leiye oo wo ho
- Kobar Masai* oo wo ho *koget tuga* oo wo ho
To kill the Masai to drive away the cattle
chekoronen oo wo ho
which is good
- Chebyosenyun* oo wo ho *kaseet luget* oo wo ho
My old mother is going to war the army
olimengen oo wo ho
where they don't know
- Obot lakwa* oo wo ho *ityach longet* oo wo ho *kogoseet*
Mother of child tie the shield is gone to
luget oo wo ho
war the army
- Kaseet luget* oo wo ho *Kobar Melelo*¹ oo wo ho
Is going to war the army to kill Melelo
ooye leiyo oo wo ho
- Kobar Melelo* oo wo ho *koget tuga* oo wo ho
To kill Melelo to drive away cattle
chesomoen oo wo ho
which is dark brown
- Chesomoen* oo wo ho *tiliten sarurik* oo wo ho
Which is brown with a white tip of the tail
ooye' leiyo oo wo ho
- Pamurtanyun* oo wo ho *litwan ngotit* oo wo ho *asi*
My brother's wife life me the spear then
iil oo wo ho
rub it with fat
- Kaseet luget* oo wo ho *olimengen*
Is going to war the army where you don't know
oo wo ho *Mangorori* oo wo ho
Mangorori
- Kobar Limek* oo wo ho *Kobar tuga* oo wo ho
To kill Jaluo to capture cattle

¹ In Masai country.

chebunen
which pass by oo wo ho

Kolongunen oo wo ho *Kipranye* ne o oo wo ho
They cross Kipranye¹ which big

ooye leiyo oo wo ho

Chebyosoni
This old mother oo wo ho *yubwan* arret oo wo ho arret
bring quickly goat goat

cheptuolyon
which has belt oo wo ho

Kagoseet luget oo wo ho *Kagoseet* luget oo wo ho
Has gone the army has gone the army

Mangorori
(to) Mangorori oo wo ho

Oye leiyo (ch) Oye leiyo ooye leiyo
(oo wo ho) (oo wo ho) (oo wo ho)

Kiseet luget oo wo ho *Kubun* koiywo oo wo ho
Is going the army passed the rocky defile

kobar Mao oo wo ho
to kill Mao

Oye leiyo. Chor. Oo wo ho

Tiendo ab Tapkelong

SONG OF TAPKELONG

(On going to initiation)

Eleiyo laleiyo, eleiyo laleiyo, eleiyo laleiyo
(eho eho ehe)

Tun isim tilienyun, tun isim tilienyun, lakwani ap
To-morrow rejoice my lover, to-morrow rejoice my lover, son of

Chepkulul eho eho ehe
Chepkulul

Ne u Arap Tanguluk, ne u Arap Tanguluk, tangul luk ²
Who like Arap Tanguluk, who like Arap Tanguluk, who leads the

¹ Name of river.

² Usually "luget". The singer is here perpetrating a pun on the name Tanguluk (leads the army).

koik iryak
 army in a crooked ¹ way like a war-horn *eho eho ehe*
Choluogin kiprator } *bis, negirat kambogot* *eho eho ehe*
 Troublesome watchroad, ² } who watch hut of
Kambogot tilienyun, } *bis, ne u Arap Chepkulul* *eho eho ehe*
 Hut of my lover, } who like Arap Chepkulul
Kutujn we Siling, *si ilor ingotyat, nemii*
 Kneel down you "Shillings", ³ then spear animal, which
morongiot
 is in tall grass *eho eho ehe*
Choluogik aiberik, } *bis, chebo oranin bo terta* *eho eho ehe*
 Troublesome warriors, } of that way of skull ⁴
Negindeyon mambarit } *bis, nebo oranin bo Kucho* *eho eho ehe*
 Who put me penis ⁵ } of that way of Kucho
Kyorule oranin bo Koiyet, anyoru lakw'ap, lakwa ap
 Travelled that way of Koiyet, I meet son of, son of
Chesogoi
 Chesogoi *eho eho ehe*
Mayame keldenyin, } *bis, kyamnda ingwon* *eho eho ehe*
 Not enough his feet, } to eat with vegetable ⁶
Eleiyo laleiyo, eleiyo laleiyo, *eho eho ehe*
Kyorute amande, amande Kipsonoi, porbori makwonye *eho eho ehe*
 I travel I reach, I reach Kipsonoi, ⁷ stir not cook ⁸
Saisere tilienyun, awendi kot kogas, kot kogas
 Farewell my lover, I am going till heard, till heard
ak kiro
 and seen ⁹ *eho eho ehe*

¹ Not in straight line, but in a roundabout way.

² A man who waits on the path at night to rape any passing girl.

³ Subdivision of the Maina age-set, thus named on the introduction of the East African currency in the stead of the Indian rupee.

⁴ Near Sotik.

⁵ Here she is accusing the warriors of having waylaid and raped her. Only on this day, during *rotinyolet*, can the names of sexual organs be used in front of the opposite sex without using a circumlocution.

⁶ The feet of Arap Chesogoi are so thin that rather than eat them it is better to eat vegetables.

⁷ River.

⁸ The water whirls round in the river like in a cooking-pot, but here nothing is cooked.

⁹ I am going to be circumcised and I will be so brave that I shall be praised.

Kagonget emosto, } *bis, nebo pet ak kemoi*
Is finished the longing, } of day and night ¹ *eho eho ehe*

Tun inget Tabutagu, isach tilienyun,
To-morrow wake Tabutagu, make love with my lover,
amengwam emosto
don't let him hurt the longing ² *eho eho ehe*

Emosto nebo tye, ingwam emosto, emosto nebo tajn
Longing of girl, you hurt longing, longing of the cow ³ *eho eho ehe*

Tun isim korgenyon, tun isim chemaluk,
To-morrow rejoice our mother, to-morrow rejoice you whose
menopause has not yet come, ³ *eleiyo laleiyo eho eho ehe*

Tun ibay aiberik, } *bis, chebo oraniep*
To-morrow feed warriors, } of the way of

Mismiso eho eho ehe
Mismiso

Tun isim Kiptoiyon, Kiptoiyot mobo tajn, neteno
To-morrow rejoice my Kiptoiyon, Kiptoiyot not of cow, ⁴ who is
tilienyun
like my lover *eho eho ehe*

Mogene korosek, } *bis, che kobo*
I cannot disgrace sacred palm, } which was of
tilienyun
my lover ⁵ *eho eho ehe*

Maigu mweito tiojn, chemweito karait,
I cannot run like animal, which runs like the colobus
monkey ⁶ *eleiyo laleiyo eho eho ehe*

¹ Now that I am going to be secluded, we will not long for each other day and night for the moment when we will join in the *singroina*.

² She is telling one of her friends in the audience to go and make love with her lover so that he may not long for a woman all day but that he may "long for cows", that is, have his mind at peace and work to collect the necessary bride-wealth so that they may marry when she comes out of initiation.

³ My mother who can still bear children.

⁴ *Kiptoiyot* means young bull calf. She calls her lover by that nickname.

⁵ I cannot disgrace by showing pain during circumcision the sacred *korosek* stick which my lover has given me to hold.

⁶ She cannot run away like the colobus monkey (a noted coward) whose skin she is wearing.

Tun *isim chepoyot,* } *bis, ne u Arap*
 To-morrow rejoice old father, } who like Arap

Singeney
Singeney eho eho ehe

*Ne u Arap Singeney, Kipsingen * Chepseron,*
 Who like Arap Singeney, the wandering bull Chepseron,¹
eleiyo laleiyo eho eho ehe

Tun *isim korgenyon,* } *bis, kot korot*
 To-morrow rejoice our mother, } till come home
Cheplochat eho eho ehe.
Cheplochat

Tiendo ap Tapkesos
 SONG OF TAPKESOS
 (On going to initiation)

Oye laleiyo, oye laleiyo oye laleiyo ;

Amache awo Lologorian, oye laleiyo
 I want to go to Lologorian

Agat tilienyun, agat tilienyun lakwa'b
 To greet my sweetheart, to greet my sweetheart child of
Nyantiek.
Nyantiek.

Si ager Kapsundu, Sundu mauchige,
 That I may see Kapsundu, Sundu who never turns round
Oye laleiyo, oye laleiyo leiyo laleiyo. Bupung.
 Close mouth.

We unye, bupujn we unye, amagas murenik
 As you, close mouth as you may not hear the warriors
kisap lagochon ; kisap lagochon kisach pik
 they are lucky these girls ; they are lucky these girls, they.
chemnyach.
 make love with people good.

¹ My father, Arap Singeney, who wanders from one wife's hut to the other like the bull Chepseron (a bull going from one herd to the other in search of cows).

Kaygay Tapkesos Kaygay Tapkesos kisach pik
But she is better Tapkesos better Tapkesos make love with
chemnyach
people who good

Kaygay Tapsigen kaygay Tapsigen kiitun pik chemnyach.
Better Tapsigen better Tapsigen married by people who good.

Tun isim korgenyon, tun isim korgenyon
To-morrow rejoice our mother, to-morrow rejoice our mother,
chebo Ketui
daughter of Ketui,

Tun osim oiberik, tun osim oiberik, chebo
To-morrow rejoice warriors, to-morrow rejoice warriors of
Kapsigor
Kapsigor

Awendi Ketolony, awendi Ketolony chemasuk en tuluet
I am going Ketolony, I am going Ketolony, can't grow up in hill

Oye laleiyo, oye laleiyo, tun isim cheboiyon
to-morrow rejoice father

Tun ibay choronok, tun ibay choronok
To-morrow feed your friends, to-morrow feed your friends,
tun igochi mayuek
to-morrow give them beer¹

Tun isim pamuru, isim pamuru ne u
To-morrow rejoice brother's wife, Rejoice sister's husband who
Arap Ketui
as Arap Ketui

Awendi cherukwen, awendi
I am going who sleep between (my lover's legs), I am going
cherukwen, masiri chachawan
who sleep between (my lover's legs), to stop the rumours
from spreading²

Masire chachawan, masire chachawan,
To stop the rumours from spreading, to stop the rumours from
masire Kapkulo
spreading, to stop them going to Kapkulo

¹ To-morrow when I have been circumcised without having shown any pain, rejoice and give your friends beer.

² To stop the rumour that I am afraid to go to initiation.

Iyyo inye cherwenyun, iyyo inye cherwenyun ngo memuchiwe.
Suppose you my friend, suppose you my friend if you cannot go.

Moboton cherukwen, moboton cherukwen
Not with me who sleeping middle, Not with me who sleeping
awendi iman.
middle I am going truly.¹

Awendi kot kogas, awendi kot kogas Kipsigis
I am going till famous, I am going till famous among Kipsigis
ak Nandi.
and Nandi.

Saisere pamongo, saisere pamongo iwe iru konyo ruon
Goodbye father, goodbye father, go sleep came sleeping

Iru konyo ruon, iru konyo ruon awendi kot
To sleep came sleeping, to sleep came sleeping, I am going
kogas.
till heard.²

THE GIRLS' SECRET LOVE SONG

Tiendo ab Tapkokwa

SONG OF TAPKOKWA³

<i>Ingongony suet</i>		<i>ongongony suet</i>	
You shake the waist	⁴ <i>ongoiye</i>	Let us shake the waist	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Ingongony suet</i>		<i>asore tiliet</i>	
You shake the waist	<i>ongoiye</i>	I go for lover	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Matijn kirobon</i>		<i>asore tiliet</i>	
Even if it is raining	<i>ongoiye</i>	I go for lover	<i>ongoiye</i>

¹ She is now addressing one of the girls who are dancing with her, "If you cannot go, you better stay behind, as I have made up my mind to go."

² Go and sleep well, my father, do not worry about me, as I shall show such courage that my name will become famous.

³ These verses are only sung when the girls are out of earshot of male listeners.

⁴ The young warriors told me that the meaning was the following: "Shake your waist when you lie with your lover, as if you remain passive he will think that you do not like him."

⁵ We shake.

<i>Asore tiliet</i> I go for lover	<i>ongoiye</i>	<i>nemi Chesumei</i> he is at Chesumei	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Matijn kaimen</i> Even become night	<i>ongoiye</i>	<i>asore tiliet</i> I go for lover	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Matijn kebiron</i> Even (if) he hits me	<i>ongoiye</i>	<i>awendi kemoi</i> I am going at night	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Matijn komi tiojn</i> Even (if) there is wild animal	<i>ongoiye</i>	<i>asore tiliet</i> I will go for lover	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Chi nemongen tiliet</i> Person not knowing a lover	<i>ongoiye</i>	<i>komomii kiynengen</i> there is nothing he knows	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Ingebe tele</i> Let us go friend	<i>ongoiye</i>	<i>kesor tilienyon</i> to go for our lover	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Kesor tilienyon</i> To go for our lover	<i>ongoiye</i>	<i>ne u Arap Chelule</i> who is like Arap Chelule	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Ingebe kangwong</i> Let us go to	<i>ongoiye</i>	<i>si kor kaimen</i> then will come the night	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Si kesor tiliet</i> We will go for lover	<i>ongoiye</i>	<i>kigochi keldo</i> we will give him thigh	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Kigochi keldo</i> We will give him thigh	<i>ongoiye</i>	<i>Kosuep kot koeth</i> lie on till morning	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Karon kemusu</i> To-morrow we will come early	<i>ongoiye</i>	<i>kebwan koinyon</i> we return to our hut	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Asi kebe kaptich</i> And then we go kraal place	<i>ongoiye</i>	<i>keibun chego</i> to bring milk	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Yekor koimen</i> Then will come night	<i>ongoiye</i>	<i>kesore tiliet</i> we go for lover	<i>ongoiye</i>
<i>Ingongony suet</i> You shake the waist	<i>ongoiye</i>	<i>kongonyi tiliet</i> it was shaking to lover ¹	<i>ongoiye</i>

¹ And the waist was shaking to the lover.

Amache aruto ilin nyon " (ihi) (oe ho oe ihi).

I want to travel our place."

SHE : "*Amuru oli o pamuru* "

"Sleep here husband's brother "

HE : "*Asi arwosto ne pamuru ?* "

"And with whom shall I sleep, my brother's wife ? "

Chor. (ihi) "*arwosto ne pamuru ?* " (ihi)

"And with whom shall I sleep, my brother's wife ? "

SHE : "*Katinye kibotye kiligin* " (ihi) Chor. (oe ho oe ihi)

"I have a girl small " ¹

HE : "*Mamuche aru we bamuru (ihi) Mamuche aru we bamuru*

"I cannot sleep brother's wife, I cannot sleep brother's

(ihi)

wife

"*Asi ande ne leget ?* " (ihi)

"Who will lean against my chest ? "

Chor. (oe he oe ihi)

SHE : "*Ana mutun negitupche.*"

"I will bring you my sister."

HE : "*Ani yebet isobak pamuru (ihi) ani yebet*

"If your sister is lost, my brother's wife, if your sister is

isobak pamuru (ihi),

lost, my brother's wife,

"*Kangobel, isobak alyane ?* " (ihi) Chor. (oe ho oe ihi).

"If lost, what shall I do ? "

SHE : "*Ani awalege.*"

"I will take her place."

HE : "*Mangen aru ak nebo (ihi) mangen aru ak nebo chi*

"I don't know how to sleep with a woman, o my

pamuru " (ihi).

brother's wife." (bis)

Oye laleiyo (ihi). Chor. (oe ho oe ihi).

SHE : "*Kerge tuga en akwot.*"

"Do like the cattle you see in the herd ? "

CHOR. *Oye laleiyo (ihi).*

HE : "*Ki amin ne porta pamuru ? (ihi).*"

"It hurts you what your body, my brother's wife ? "

¹ I have a small girl who will sleep with you.

SHE : " *Ki amin choruet nebo Kaa!* "

" He hurts the friend of the hut ! "

CHOR. *Oe ho oe ihi.*

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

Masibori Chor. (*magose ane*) *yote koi* Chor. (*moyote*
Masibori ¹ Chor. (I cannot hear) open this hut Chor. (I cannot
ane) Chor. *Aryoktoi oyote*
 open) Chor. I jumped I opened

Kere koi Chor. (*magere ane kere koi* Chor. (*magere*
 Shut this hut Chor. (I cannot shut) shut this hut Chor. (I cannot
ane) Chor. *Aryoktoi agere*
 shut) Chor. I jumped I shut

Keru pechu Chor. (*makeru ane*) *keru pechu*
 Pour this water Chor. (I cannot pour) pour this water
 Chor. (*makeru ane*) Chor. *Aryoktoi akeru*
 Chor. (I cannot pour) Chor. I jumped I poured

Sute geli Chor. (*masute ane*) *sute geli*
 Hold up this foot ² Chor. (I cannot hold up) Hold up this
 (*masute ane*) Chor. *Aryoktoi asute*
 foot (I cannot hold up) Chor. I jumped I held up

Twochinewon Chor. (*motwoe ane*) *twochinewon* (*motwoe*
 Shake to me ² Chor. (I cannot shake) shake to me (I cannot
ane) Chor. *Aryoktoi atwoe*
 shake) Chor. I jumped I shook (her)

Obot lakwa Chor. (*moyoni ane*) *obot lakwa* (*moyoni*
 Mother of child Chor. (I cannot agree) mother of child (I cannot
ane) Chor. *Aryoktoi ayoni*
 agree) Chor. I jumped I agreed

Kebe kechu Chor. (*mowendi ane*) *kebe kechu*
 Let us go to these huts Chor. (I cannot go) let us go to these huts
 (*mowendi ane*) Chor. *Aryoktoi awendi*
 (I cannot go) Chor. I jumped I went

¹ Masibori is the name of his wife, whom he is addressing.

² He is lying with her and asking her to help him to perform the motions of coitus.

Suse penyi Chor. (masuse ane) suse penyi (masuse
Bite this meat (I cannot bite) bite this meat (I cannot
ane) Chor. Aryoktoi asuse
bite) I jumped I bit

Bele benyi Chor. (mabele ane) bele benyi (mabele
Cook this meat (I cannot cook) cook this meat (I cannot
ane) Chor. Aryoktoi abele
cook) I jumped I cooked.

LAMENT OF AN OLD MAN WHOSE SON WAS KILLED

Kimii en kejn poyot ne kitinye werinyin agenge
There was in years ago an old man who had his son one
kiyto ako tinye tuga chechang kot ko kicham kwendi koyogisye
only and have cattle many indeed and he liked to go to grazing
werinyin. Ko tun en pesiet age kobok Masaek kobwa konyor
his son. And the next day came together Masai came meet
werinyin koyagi tuga kobar ak koget tuga.
his son grazing cattle they kill and drive away the cattle.
Kogenis pesionoton poyot kot koimen ama ker chi age
Waiting that day old man till night without see man any (at)
tugul ana tuga. Ko tun karon kosip poyot . oli .
all nor cattle. And the next morning follow old man where
kogaba tuga kwaget, kwo kot konyor werinyin ko kepar
went cattle to graze, went till meet his son who is killed
kowek konyo kaa. Ingap kail kaa konyo koyokto
he turned back came home. When he reached home came sent
piik kogurchi piik ab Ornywan che kiguren
people to call to him people of his clan which was called
"Kapmorosek" kole, "Olenjine kobwa koget
"Kapmorosek" he said, "tell them to come drive away
moryongenichu amun mechu kenyit kinye, oli ki
this cattle because I am not as in years past, when I was

*apare pelek ago me agese Kipkoloit*¹
 killing elephant and then (now) I cannot harvest Kipkoloit
ago me ko baibai amun kige parwon somnyot
 and then I cannot be happy because was killed my big boy
agege, kotyen kole :
 one, he sings saying :

Eleiyo lale oye m.m. eleiyo lale oye ihm

Oyakten Kapmorosek m.m. Olenjin mechu kenyit
 Send message to Kapmorosek m.m. tell them I am not as in
kinye ihm
 years past ihm

Kobwa kogel moryongechu m.m. kigeparwon somnyo-
 Come to drive this cattle m.m. has been killed my
denyun ihm
 big boy ihm

Kipkinot ama ingor m.m. agose ane
 I have been torn like a piece of cloth m.m. I feel I am like
katagume ihm
 a pond² ihm

Mechu kenyit kinye m.m. oli kigesoti
 I am not as in years past m.m. when we were harvesting
kipkolo ihm
 the fields ihm

Oli ki apare pelek kiche ihm aman na
 When was I killing elephants past ihm eat me nowadays
kimagetiet ihm
 the hyena³ ihm

nemii magaganju ihm amun negomiten chi age
 Which is in the tall grasss ihm because there is not man
tugul ihm
 any all⁴ ihm

Eleiyo lale oye ihm eleiyo lale oye ihm

¹ *Kipkoloit* here means beer given in reward for harvesting.

² I am like a pond which cannot move, but has to remain for ever in one place. (This is the explanation given by the singer.)

³ Even the hyena could vanquish me.

⁴ Life is not worth living now that I do not have a single son left.

THE SONG OF KIPKARIN

Tiendo ab Kipkarin

Kitun koyomiskee piik kole "onget
 Days ago promise together people saying: "Let us drive
tuga koba ngejn." *Konget chilo aechenyin koba*
 cattle to go saltlick." A man drive and his sweetheart they
tuwan, koba ngomii oret en kemoi
 went both, they went when they were on the way at night
kelenjigee "ingimuny ak yon tugul ko agetos
 they said together, "Let us rest and time all is grazing the
tuga." *Koruiyo kot kutyi chilo koget tuga koba ngejn.*
 cattle." They sleep till forget man to drive cattle to go saltlick.
Koruiyo kot koeck kowek koba kaa. Ko tun
 They sleep till become day turn back to go home. And the
pesiet age koget tuga inegen kot koit ngejn, ingap
 next day he drives cattle alone till arrive saltlick, when he
kait ngejn komii Masaek che kigonye koreben
 arrives saltlick, where Masai who waiting to take by force
piik tuga. Koteben Masaek chilo, "Amun ne asi igetu
 people's cattle. Ask Masai man, "Why then do you drive
tuga inyegen kobwa ngejn?" Kolenji chilo,
 cattle you alone to come saltlick?" Tell them the man,
"Kogetu kilyon amun marich karon oliep
 "I drive alone because (it will be) narrow to-morrow here
ngejn en tuga ak aboyon. Kolenjigee Masaek ongegajn
 saltlick of cattle¹ and I am old. Tell themselves Masai let us wait
tuga che chang chebwone karon. Kongejn
 cattle which many which coming to-morrow. Licked his
tukyik chito kot kobyoso. Kowek ak kogete
 cattle man till they are satisfied. He turned back and driving
tuga kot koit oret kowach ak Kolenjin piik,
 cattle till he reached the road he shouts and tells the people,
"Matoget tuga koba ngejn amun tibe piik
 "Don't drive the cattle to go saltlick because waiting people
Masaek en ngejn." *Kogas Masaek kole, "Amune asi*
 Masai at saltlick." Heard the Masai said, "Why then he

¹ There will be so many cattle here to-morrow that this saltlick will be too narrow to hold them.

koberberech chilo agenge kot kegas komnye kobar
 cheated us one man until we understood it was good to kill
noton." *Kwo Kipkarin ngap koit kot konen*
 that one." He went Kipkarin when he reached home took
Kipugandet, kotien kole :
 Kipugandet,¹ he sung saying :

Tarona mureret chelalang kubes Chor. m.m.
 Troublesome bride with the warm thigh

Ne kingololuon kot awe kityon ngejn Chor. m.m.
 Who talked to me till I went alone saltlick

Ne kieten tuga koba ngejn kemoi Chor. m.m.
 Who refused cattle to go saltlick night

Ndo maiyai ngomnotet ko ta baran
 If I had not done something clever I would have been killed

Masaek
 by the Masai m.m.

eleiyo laleiyo m.m.

Tarona mureren chelalang kubes m.m.
 Troublesome bride with the warm thigh

Tuga ab Tegerey kiba ngejn kemoi m.m.
 Cattle of Tegerey went saltlick night

ODE TO THE VILLAGE OF KONON²

Choluogin sosyot Chor. (ii-hi) *Kogochin piik ap*
 Troublesome wild palm They gave people of

¹ A musical instrument resembling a lyre.

² Those songs are sung during the *rotyinotet* ceremony of initiation, or on other festive occasions, and praise the country-side and the native village. They usually form part of another longer song.

The meaning of the song is the following : The people of my country gave the wild palm which grows near us, to the people who use pots (instead of calabashes) for their milk. They cleaned their pots with our *sosyot* and they became white as clouds. We live in the country of *Konon* among the waterfalls and the fields. We belong to the country where grow the bamboo and the podocarpus tree, which break the power of death so that the sun comes out to shine on us again.

(The "*saptet kiil met*", the *saptet* which breaks death, means that they use the *saptet* (podocarpus) tree as a medicine.)

terenik
pots Chor. (*ih*)

Kobagash chechu lelach (*ii-hi*) *Chuachlelach u polik* (*ih*)
It leaves these white These white as clouds

Abo pichu 'chok (*ii-hi*) *pichu kirof*
I belong those people ones these people they join

Konoin
Konoin (*ih*)

Konoin lagu pey (*ii-hi*) *Konoin apim baren* (*ih*)
Konoin come down water *Konoin* of the field

Abo pun tegan konyo piik (*ii-hi*) *Abo*
I belong pass bamboo they came many people I belong

saptet kiil met (*ih*)
saptet tree it broke death

Kiil met ak koger kong'asis (*ii-hi*)
It broke death and looked sunshine

Chor. *Éleyio, laleyio, laleyio.*

ODE TO THE VILLAGES OF KAGIPSIRICH

Kimenye imbar Kagipsirich Chor. (*ih*)
We live (at) field (of) Kagipsirich

Kimenye kochur moy (ihim) moy ak soton (ih)
We live (where) play about the calf, the calf and the calabash

Kimenye echek tuluonin kebenen (ihin) kebenen tuga
We live ourselves that hill of sandy of sandy cattle

romoswek, (ih)
sides,¹

Tuluonin (ee ihim) lale kot konget (ih)
That hill (where) the grass is burned till remained

kitigin ne ruen kiplekwet.
small where sleeps the rabbit.²

¹ Where the cattle have sandy sides.

² Where we burn the grass (prior to planting) but a little remains, where the rabbits can hide.

Achame koin (ee ihm) *koita ab Kiboney* (ihi)
I love that stone (ee ihm) stone of Kiboney (ihi)

Ne ki istogee kwo urwo (ii, ihi)
Which rolls to go shade (ii, ihi)

Asi kwaim segetet ak uson
And then eat segetet and the roots " uson " ¹ (*leiyo, loleyo*)

Achame sugutek (ihim) *en Pirar* (ihi) *Kiam koita kot*
I love salt water (ihim) at Pirar (ihi) They ate stone till
komang
came through ² (ihi)

Kimenye tuluoni (ee ihm) *arusen kirugik*
We live this hill (ee ihm) (where) the blue-grey bulls (ihi)

Arusen kirugik en limo. (ihi)
Blue-grey bulls at grazing. (ihi)

¹ The stone which rolls down the hill and stops under the shade of a tree like the man who eats the purgatives segetet and uson and then goes to defecate under a tree (in the early morning, according to custom).

² Where the cattle drink so much that the stones can be seen through the water.

ADDENDA

While this book was in the Press the District Commissioner's Office, Kericho, kindly made available the following information :

(1) " There is no census of Kipsigis stock. It is estimated that there are about 150,000 sheep and goats, and 150,000 cattle in the Native Reserve. This does not include stock owned by squatters on European farms. The figures are only approximate and are possibly too high at present as losses have certainly occurred from rinderpest.

(2) " The area of the Native Reserve was approximately 830 square miles, of which 9 square miles are alienated on lease. This does not include the Mau Forest Reserve . . . nor does it include the Chepalungu. The latter has now been added to the Native Reserve, less an area of about 16 square miles for European settlement. The total addition is thus about 148 square miles, much of which is thick forest of little value for grazing or agriculture. At the same time, about 2 square miles have been excised for a township of Chemagel."

Thus the total area available for Native occupation is :—

Original Reserve (830-9)	.	.	821 sq. miles
Chepalungu addition	.	.	148 " "
			969 " "
Less Chemagel Township	.	.	2 " "
			967 sq. miles

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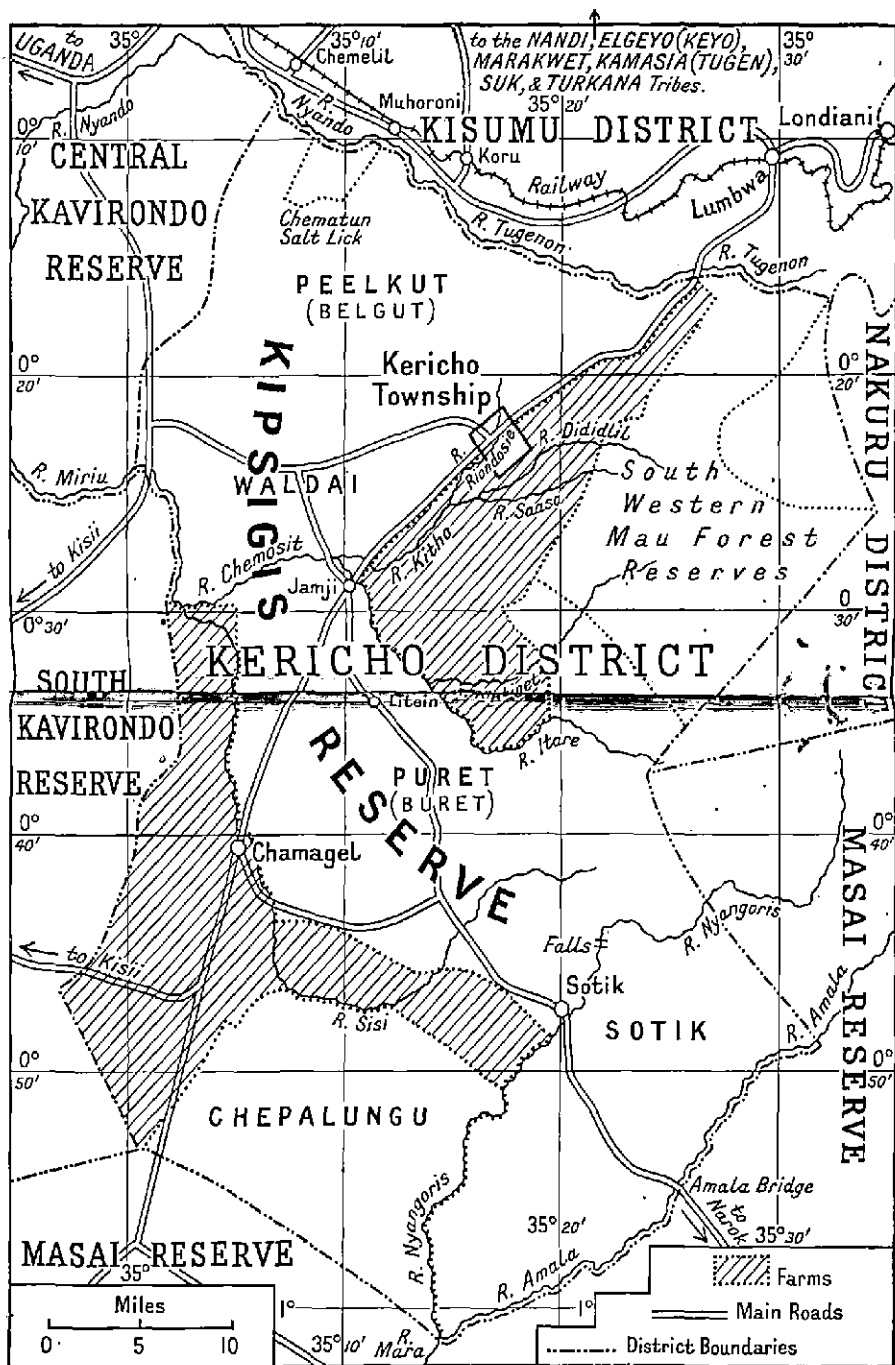
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MAP OF KIPSIGIS RESERVE

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